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MAURICE, Thomas

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THE

MODERN HISTORY

OF

HINDOSTAN:

COMPREHENDING THAT OF

THE GREEK EMPIRE OF BACTRIA,

AND OTHER

GREAT ASIATIC KINGDOMS, BORDERING ON ITS WESTERN FRONTIER.

COMMENCING AT

THE PERIOD OF THE DEATH OF ALEXANDER,

AND

INTENDED TO BE BROUGHT DOWN TO THE CLOSE OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

VOL I. PART I.

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HENRY ADDINGTON,

FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY, CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER,

THE FIRM FRIEND OF HIS COUNTRY, AND OF PEACE,

THE

MODERN HISTORY OF INDIA,

IS

RESPECTFULLY AND GRATEFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY HIS

OBLIGED AND OBEDIENT SERVANT,

THOMAS MAURICE.

PREFACE.

THE Title of MODERN HISTORY OF HINDOSTAN, by which I have distinguished the present Work, must be understood by the reader comparatively, with respect to those very remote periods to which the preceding Volumes have reference, and to which all transactions in India, posterior to the invasion of Alexander, must undoubtedly be considered as *Modern*. Although, for the sake of connection, it has been thought proper to commence the Work from that conqueror's decease, yet it will be candidly confessed by every person conversant with the subject, that, deducting what the classical writers of Greece and Rome have delivered down to us concerning the Greek empire of Bactria, founded on the ruins of the Macedonian, and the intercourse with India of the Egyptian, Syrian, and Parthian empires, there exist but very scanty materials for any regular history of India, till the establishment, in Asia, of the celebrated dynasty of the

Gaznavide Sultans; the rapacious conquerors, in the tenth century, of that secluded and beautiful region. Whether any native histories of these times remain among the literary treasures of Benares, and to what extent, is a point extremely uncertain; but what has been observed in a former Preface seems more likely to be the genuine fact, that the Brahmins have been more zealous to preserve the history of their wretched superstitions than that of their early sovereigns. None, at least, have yet appeared in the languages of Europe, though every thing is to be expected from the industry and talents of the gentlemen who compose the Asiatic Society. What could be done by an individual has been performed with zeal, with diligence, and with perseverance. From every quarter, whence a ray of intelligence could be obtained, I have endeavoured to collect the scattered gleams, and have brought their concentrated light to bear upon the obscure subject which I have, for some years, laboured to illumine. That in this, as in some other instances, the labourer has not reaped the soil which he has tilled, is only regretted because it has prevented his efforts from being more extensively useful.

After all, however an *historian* may lament the deficiency of materials for the domestic history of India, yet the mere contests of its Rajahs for pre-eminence in

their respective provinces, or even the grander efforts of the supreme sovereign, or Maharajah himself, to subjugate to his controul the rebel chieftains of their haughty race, of which that history must principally consist, could not long or deeply interest the public mind. The same unvaried tale of insult and revenge, of victory and defeat, occurring in every successive reign, could not fail to weary by its repetition, and disgust by its uniformity; and, I am convinced, that the only truly interesting and instructive history of India must be planned on that enlarged scale and that comprehensive view of the affairs of Asia, upon which it is here undertaken. Considered independently of its connection with the neighbouring empires, flourishing at the same period, the Seleucidian, the Parthian, the Bactrian, and, in later periods, the powerful Mohammedan kingdoms and dynasties that rolled their thunder round the mountains on its frontier, the history of India, instead of firing, as it ought, equally the soul of the writer and the reader, would sink to an insipid narrative, which others, than myself, might write, and persons of a different description from my patrons would probably peruse.

It has been well observed by a writer who preceded me in this line of historical investigation, but whose

Oriental researches, made at great labour and expense, could not keep him from a jail, if they did not lead him to it ;-that the course of a great history should resemble the current of a vast river, with difficulty restrained within its bounds, and sometimes even overflowing its banks ; sometimes rushing forward with a great and impetuous descent, and at others gliding on with an equal and almost imperceptible motion.* From natural impulse, not less than conviction, I am led heartily to accede to this decision of Ockley, and am resolved to adhere, in the present, as in the former work, to that more dignified style of narration, which alone becomes the majesty of history. After having made choice of a period fraught with sublime and interesting events, the true historian descends not to trivial incidents, but seizing the striking facts and prominent characters of the times, consigns them to immortality on the faithful tablet of her recording page. It is, above all things, incumbent upon him properly to *feel* the various subjects which his pen describes—when the trumpets are sounded, he must glow with his hero, and transport his reader with himself, amidst the thickest of the battle. But while he gives to valour its due tribute of applause, he should never forget (and I trust in these

* Professor Ockley, in his preface to the second volume of his History of the Saracens.

pages it has not been forgotten,) to expose in terms of just and warm indignation, the sanguinary principles that too frequently accompany the warrior to the field of Asiatic conflict; the ferocity of Mohammedan zeal, and the ravages of Tartar barbarity.

So far back as the year 1790, when the Directors of the East India Company, on the recommendation of my respected friend, Mr. Nathaniel Smith, at that time their Chairman, first honoured my humble efforts with their patronage, I had the honour of addressing a Letter to them, containing the plan and prospectus of my intended history. It was meant as an introduction to its *modern*, rather than to its *ancient* history, which I had then not the remotest idea of composing, and principally alludes to writers and events posterior to the death of Alexander, at which the present work commences. It was, however, approved of as a composition, and by the desire of intelligent friends, was printed at the head of that work, with which, in truth, it has little concern, since that history, as all other Oriental histories of such a remote retrospect must necessarily be, is mostly of a mythological nature. As there are many persons to whom the Modern History of India may be acceptable, who yet may not choose to purchase the ancient work, from the numerous engravings become so very expensive, but by whom the

parts of that letter, giving an account of the Persian and Arabian authors cited in this work, are indispensably necessary to be known, the subscribers to the ancient history, who may purchase the present, it is hoped, will not be offended at finding the substance of that Address again brought before their view, though with many emendations and additions, in the initial chapters of the first and second book of this volume, in which my authorities used in the composition of it, are produced. The letter in question will be rejected as irrelevant, in any future edition of the ancient part, and be only preserved in its present form, and in its present more appropriate situation.

A correct and elegant Map of Modern India, executed upon such an extended scale, as to include the geography of the great empires situated to the north and west of India, the annals of which are so inseparably blended with those of that country, as to form a part of its history, is at this moment engraving for this work by that excellent artist, Mr. Arrowsmith. It will contain the new divisions of the Peninsula, will be a coloured one, with an index pointing out the present possessors of the different provinces, and shall infallibly be given with the second part. With respect to engravings, it is utterly out of my power to decorate this volume with ANY, for printing as I now

do, at my sole hazard and expense, unaided, as before, by the East India Company, to whose generosity I was unwilling again to apply, and with only a very slender list of subscribers, I have found it a task sufficiently arduous, to produce at the present juncture, even this First Part of my intended volume. It is now a well known fact that, from the late enormous rise in the price of the finer papers, when that heavy charge, the expenses of printing, and the just profits of the bookseller shall have been deducted, a publication of any magnitude must have very superior merit indeed, to reimburse the author; any adequate emolument for labour and time expended in the composition of it, is wholly out of the question. Under these incumbrances, and still far remote from those bowers of learned leisure, in which alone reflection is matured, or rather in the midst of the perpetual interruptions of a public situation, I can proceed but slowly; yet I WILL proceed, and hope ultimately to produce a work honourable to myself, and not disgraceful to my country!

The above just and ingenuous statement, will, it is presumed, prove a sufficient apology to the indulgent public, for the mode in which this volume can alone be vended. It will be published in two parts, and will consist of about five hundred pages, the price

two guineas; but, the former work having been also published in parts, and many of them being left separately on hand, to the great loss of the author, no person can have the first part without subscribing, at the same time, for the complete volume, for which proper receipts will be given. The SECOND PART is considerably advanced in the press; and will, if possible, be ready for delivery in the ensuing JUNE.

British Museum,
February 1st, 1802.

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MODERN HISTORY OF HINDOSTAN.

BOOK I

CONTAINING THE HISTORY OF INDIA, FROM THE DEATH OF ALEXANDER, TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE MOHAMMEDAN ÆRA.

CHAPTER I.

General View of the Empire, and summary Survey of the Character and Manners of the People of Hindostan.—Sketch of the principal Events detailed in its Ancient History, with a View to connect it with the Modern History of that Country.—An Analysis of the Contents of this and the succeeding Volume—of the Characters of the successive Invaders of the Indian Territory—and of the general Plan pursued by the Author, in the Composition of it.

INDIA, or rather HINDOSTAN, is a country more distinguished by the vicissitudes it has undergone, and more remarkable for the peculiarity of its inhabitants and productions, than any other on the face of the earth. Its natural history and aspect strongly partake of the same predominant feature of singularity. The grandeur and extent of its two celebrated rivers, which, after diffusing verdure and plenty through many rich and powerful kingdoms, fall into the ocean, at the distance of four hundred leagues from each

other: the stupendous height of those mountains, by which, as an everlasting barrier, it is on three sides girded, and of which another mighty ridge extends quite across, from north to south, causing an agreeable variety of climate, and exhibiting, on its opposite extremities, the surprising phænomenon of two seasons at one period; the luxuriant beauty and fertility of its plains; the fragrance of its aromatic woods; the delicious flavour of its fruits; the immense treasures daily poured forth from its subterraneous regions, and the rich variety of its manufactures; have rendered India, from the remotest ages of antiquity, equally the wonder of the curious, and the delight of the voluptuous; the object of contemplation to the philosopher, and too frequently of rapacity to the unrelenting fury of the soldier.

The natives of this beautiful country, like the Chinese, and all other Eastern nations, carry up their annals to an incredible antiquity. Their early writers, according to Pliny,* boasted of a long succession of great, wise, and powerful princes, who reigned over it for many thousand years before the invasion of Alexander the Great. These exaggerated accounts, however, have been proved to be utterly repugnant to truth, to reason, and to every just system of chronology. The pretensions of the Indians, as a nation, to high antiquity are readily admitted; but when they wish us to consider that antiquity as unfathomable, they only excite our pity, or contempt.

Secluded from any immediate intercourse with the neighbouring countries, by the peculiarity of its customs and religion, India was governed during the very early periods alluded to, by one supreme Maha-rajah, and other great feudatory princes; the extent of whose dominions varied at different æras, according to the peaceful or aspiring nature of the sovereign. These were armed with the full powers of monarchy in their several governments,

* Pliny, lib. vi. cap. 17.

and, as we are informed, both by Diodorus Siculus* and Strabo,† on the subject, were absolute proprietors of the lands in their respective jurisdictions. They claimed affinity with the sun and moon, and being assisted in the administration of affairs by the counsels of the Brachmans, who, like the Magi of Persia, discharged at once the sacred function of the priesthood, and the high hereditary office of counselling the monarch, were regarded with reverence that bordered on adoration. The domestic history, however, of these most ancient dynasties of princes is unfortunately involved in impenetrable obscurity. Their names alone remain, a dead letter on the recording tablet of time, and exhibit an awful and an instructive lesson on the vanity of human grandeur, and the pride of sublunary distinction.

The inhabitants of India were then, as at present, divided into various tribes, or casts, never intermingled in marriage, at entertainments, or in any intimate manner associated. Their great ingenuity in all the mechanical arts, their genius for commerce, which they carried on to a considerable extent with Egypt and Arabia, the liberal hospitality and love of truth, the rigid temperance and frugality by which they were distinguished; but, above all, the profound learning and lofty precepts of morality inculcated by the ancient Brachmans, are celebrated with lavish encomiums, not only by the above-cited authors, but by many others of the most respectable character for veracity in pagan antiquity. The successors, however, of those holy sophists, in the present day, are supposed dreadfully to have mutilated the simple and sublime doctrines of their great legislator, by adopting the most absurd superstitions, and devoting themselves to the grossest idolatry. It has been conjectured by many intelligent writers, little acquainted with the genius of the Hindoos, that many of these superstitions were borrowed during their intercourse, in succeeding ages, with the

* Diodorus Siculus, lib. ii. p. 41. † Strabo, lib. xvi. p. 703.

Egyptians, and in the monstrous figures and images of deity that are at present worshipped in the pagodas of India, they have imagined can be clearly traced the hieroglyphic representations of the gods of Egypt.

But the very reverse of the argument is most likely to be the truth. The genius of the Indians was ever too proud to borrow either ceremonies of religion or maxims of policy from their neighbours on either confine of their empire. The Egyptians have either appropriated to themselves the ancient mythological rites and symbols of India; or, the maxim which through these volumes has been endeavoured to be demonstrated is just, they have derived both from one primitive source of Cuthite profanation.

The ancient classical writers had, in fact, but a very imperfect conception of the religion of the Indians. Jupiter Ammon, Pan, and Pluto are said to have been the objects of their worship. Such were the Grecian appellations for the several deities, or rather attributes of deity, adored in Hindostan. With more truth was the sacred Ganges affirmed to be an object of superstitious veneration, when, charged with the blessings of Providence, he descended in majesty from the mountains, and with his overflowings fertilized the thirsty soil.

The legislator whose sublime precepts improved; the hero whose resistless sword defended; the patriot whose inventive fancy adorned, with useful and liberal arts, his favoured country, secured the fervent prayers of the grateful Indian; was first remembered with admiration, and then deified. The very animal whose milk nourished him, and whose labours turned the fruitful sod, received his tributary homage, and was ranked in order next to a divinity. Whatever has life shares his affection, and partakes of his benevolence. Hospitals are erected, and endowed with large stipends, for the preservation and support of the different species of insects and animals; and we are informed by Ovington, of a certain secretary

to the English brokers of Surat, who for a long time cherished a prodigious snake in his own house, which he daily fed with bread and milk, on the supposition that its body was the receptacle of the soul of his deceased father.

Except in the single circumstance of the pure primæval religion of India, which descended from their patriarchal ancestors, having, in some melancholy instances, degenerated into idolatry, no perceivable vicissitude has taken place among this celebrated people, from the commencement of their empire to the present day. Whatever is true of them at one period, is equally true of them at another. The laws of the Medes and Persians were not more unalterable. From age to age, from father to son, through a hundred generations, the same uniformity of manners, and cast of character prevail; inexterminable by the sword, incorruptible by the vices, and unalterable by the example, of their conquerors.

Strangers, in general, to the turbulence of ambition, to the fever of intemperance, and all the tumultuous violence of the more boisterous passions, it cannot, however, be denied that the Hindoos are often the victims of one most fatal and degrading vice, insatiable avarice! When inflamed with this passion, its influence over their bosoms is said to know neither limit nor restraint. In the accumulation of wealth all their faculties are absorbed; but, ever mindful of the grasping extortion of their Mohammedan governors, they are reported to bury that wealth under ground, and dare not trust even their children with the fatal secret. The most cruel tortures cannot compel them to reveal the place of its concealment; the horror of threatened defilement has alone any influence over their firmness, and to avoid this menace, they fly for refuge to the destroying steel, or elude the inventive malice of their persecutors, by swallowing a dose of poison. Thus are the plains of Hindostan, like those of modern Tartary, covered with hoards of secret treasure; and, in this manner, may partly be accounted for those enormous sums of silver

bullion which are constantly importing into the country, and swallowed up as in a vast vortex, without ever being exported, or visibly increasing the quantity in circulation.

If, however, they are sometimes hurried away by this destructive passion, and by the stings of jealousy, the result of disproportionate marriages, into extremes which militate against that mild cast of character by which they are in general distinguished, the Hindoos have a thousand excellent qualities to counterbalance the defect. They are not less ardent in the love of their country, than zealous in their attachment to the institutions of their forefathers. In domestic life, they are tender and affectionate, and in their morals, for the most part, unsullied.

The above concise sketch of the country and character of the people of Hindostan, in addition to what has been already intimated on that subject, has been thought not improperly introductory to the pages of their modern history; from which we shall no longer detain the reader than, for the sake of connecting the two works, will be necessary to take a summary retrospect of what has been already attempted in this intricate and little explored path of literature, and exhibit a clear concatenated display of those interesting scenes, which will still lay claim to his attention, during the extended period of above two thousand years.

After having, in the ancient part of this work, considered the various accounts given by the Indians themselves of their cosmogony, and combated effectually, it is hoped, their absurd chronological assumptions above-mentioned, on the ground of that very astronomy on which the air-built fabric was erected; after having discussed the history of the various Avatars, and shewn the entire consonance between the oldest Indian records, respecting the creation, the deluge, and other important events, and the Mosaic, with this only difference, that the former are clothed in the veil of mythology, while the latter are radiant in the lustre of unadorned truth; after paying also that

just respect which is due to the earliest historians of *classical* antiquity, even when treating of ages deeply involved in fabulous obscurity; after having displayed the romantic exploits, related by those historians, of the Indian Bacchus and Hercules, and pointed out what degree of credibility may be due to the accounts of the irruptions into India, of the Egyptian Sesostris, the Assyrian Semiramis, and other preceding invaders of India, we endeavoured to discover how far the Persians penetrated into a country, which they for ages boasted to have subdued, and rendered tributary to that enormous empire which they once possessed in Asia. We found Alexander, in fact, grounding his right to India on the claims of the ancient Persian monarchs, whose dynasty he had utterly subverted, for the suspended tribute; and though the claim appeared somewhat dubious, and the motive rather to satiate ambition and avarice, than to exact justice from the tardy Hindoos; yet we could not but admire the ardour manifested in exploring, and the intrepidity displayed in conquering, so vast and distant an empire.

At that luminous period of our history, having emerged from the region of mystery and fable, we felt ourselves firmly treading on classic ground; and, taking Arrian and the other Greek historians for our conductors, we presented to the view of the reader, that triumphant hero, with his determined Greeks, after trampling on the ruins of the Persian empire, bending their toilsome march down the precipices of Caucasus, or rather of Paropamisus, a branch of the Caucasus, towards the banks of the Indus; and we exhibited the mighty POURAVA, the Porus of the classics, towering above the rival princes of India, as well in the gigantic stature of his body as the comprehensive faculties of his mind, with an army numerous as the locusts, issuing from his renowned capital, to give unsuccessful battle to his too powerful antagonist. We then accompanied the undaunted Greek down the Indus, detailed the

progress of his harassed fleet and army along the barbarous shore of Carmania; and, entering Babylon with him in triumph, beheld in that capital the melancholy termination of his life and his glory. The above is a brief retrospect of past transactions connected with this history; let us, with a glance somewhat more extended, take a survey of the future.

From the death of Alexander till the commencement of the Hegira, or Mohammedan æra, in the sixth century, the path of Indian history becomes again gloomy, cheerless, treacherous, and unconnected. We are possessed of few authentic documents to guide, and still fewer important incidents to vary, the uninteresting narrative. We shall trace, however, some vestiges of ancient fortitude and independence in the daring and successful efforts of Sandracottus, the *Sinsarchund* of Ferishtah, to shake off the Macedonian yoke, or rather that of Seleucus, the successor of Alexander, in his Syrian conquests; but we shall still be compelled to acknowledge, notwithstanding the vigorous, and, for the moment, effectual, opposition of Sandracottus, that, in the time of Antiochus the Great, India was not entirely independent of the power of the Seleucidæ, since, as we are informed by Polybius, this monarch exacted a tribute of elephants from Saphogasinus, its king, who seems to have been the *Jona* of Ferishtah, or one of his posterity, who, about that period, (two centuries before the Christian æra,) sat on the imperial throne of India. Dark and barren as this part of the work must necessarily be, I shall endeavour, from various fragments relative to India, in the history of these Seleucidæ, and that of the Ptolemys in Egypt; from the scanty records of the Greek sovereigns of Bactria, the dynasty of the Arsacidæ, and the other neighbouring nations; and from the twilight glimmering of information scattered through the pages of Roman history, both of the eastern and western empire; to connect the chain of events, and retain, unextinguished, the spirit that ought to animate every historical composition.

After this long interval of doubt and obscurity, we shall observe the scene grow gradually more clear and luminous. The clouds that darkened the historical page vanish before the effulgence of the crescent of Mohammed, now rising in baneful glory in the terrified East. Urged on by the sanguinary precepts of the Coran, and the same insatiable ambition that distinguished its author; fired with the love of military glory, and impatient for the honourable title of Gazi,* we see the heroes of the Arabian superstition successively pour their armies into the desolated plains of India. Filled, as we must be, with ardent admiration at the invincible fortitude with which, in pursuit of those objects, they surmounted difficulties almost insuperable, and, at the same time fired, as we ought to be, with indignation, excited by nature and Christianity, at their intolerant and destructive principles, we see them penetrate, with equal ease, the snows of Caucasus, and the deserts of Thibet.† Descending thence, more terrible than all the inundations of her Ganges, we behold those remorseless marauders plundering her pagodas, sanctioned by the devotion, and rich with the accumulated wealth, of ages; mutilating her idols, venerable from the remotest antiquity; driving her rajahs from their fortresses, before deemed impregnable; and laying the noble capitals of Canouge and Delhi in ruins.

The history of those warlike tribes, that, from the north of Asia, as from an exhaustless hive, have swarmed over half the kingdoms of Europe and the East, and usurped the thrones of many of their most powerful monarchs, has been too long buried in silence and obscurity. Engaged in more interesting pursuits, and wandering in more flowery and beaten paths, the man of polished

* "Gazi signifies a man who carries on religious war," (as we understand the word crusader.) See Abulgazi Khan's Hist. of the Tartars, Vol. I. p. 252. The illustrious author's name is a proof of his own remark.

† The route of Sultan Mahmud, in his expedition to Canouge, lay through Thibet; that of Timur over the Indian Caucasus.

manners and science turns, with cold and averted look, from the bleak mountainous regions of Scythia, and falsely imagines its history as barren as the country. Arguing upon mistaken premises, and deluded by partial and unjust representations, he considers the whole race, both of Tartars and Arabs, as a generation of fierce and intractable barbarians, destitute of arts and culture, the decided enemies of all science, and the remorseless destroyers of all its records. But, on this subject, let us hear a writer well versed in the history of Asia. Mr. Richardson, in language equally forcible and animated, declares, that " in the eighth, ninth, and succeeding centuries, when the European world was clouded with barbarity and ignorance; when sovereign princes and great feudal lords could neither write nor read, the Arabians rivalled the Romans of the Augustan age, in erudition and genius; whilst, with a more extensive empire, they excelled them in magnificence, and in the more refined splendour and elegance of life. The Khalifs Al Modhi, Al Rashid, Al Mamoun, and other monarchs of the illustrious house of Al Abbas, were men of learning, genius, and politeness; learning and genius were found, therefore, the surest avenues to royal favour; they were, of consequence, universally cultivated; princes, generals, and viziers, being not only magnificent patrons of literary merit, but holding, themselves, a conspicuous rank among writers of the most distinguished class."

That zeal for the encouragement of learning which animated the Arabian princes, continued to glow, with almost equal fervour, in the breasts of the Tartar monarchs, their conquerors and successors, in these parts of Asia. To Halaku, surnamed Il Khan, the grandson of Gengis, and founder of their monarchy in Persia, we owe the astronomical tables of Nasireddin, called, from him, Ilkhanian. He built a magnificent observatory at Maragha, in Persia, and invited thither all the great astronomers of his time, to observe the motions of the heavenly bodies. Gazan Khan, his sixth

successor, caused the history of the Moguls and Tartars to be written by his wazir, or vizier, Fadlallah; and Abusaid Khan the Great devoted to literary pursuits the whole of that time which was not engrossed by the immediate concerns of the empire.

Timur Bec, without literature himself, was still its patron; by his descendants, the same flame was cherished inviolate; or rather, in this line of Eastern conquerors, it broke forth with renovated strength and lustre. Of the truth of this assertion, a conspicuous proof will hereafter be given, in the renowned astronomer Ulug Beg; with whom may be classed the illustrious Shahroc, and his son, the Sultan Ibrahim, who founded at Shiras a noble college, with ample endowments for the reward and encouragement of literature. The conduct of his posterity, who sat on the throne of India, through every period of their empire, while that empire existed in its vigour, afforded the most ample and honourable testimonies, that in them the hallowed spark remained still unextinguished.

But to return to the more immediate events of this history. Having taken rather an extensive retrospect of the rise, decline, and fall, of the Gaznavide, the Gauride, and Charazmian, empires, whose respective sovereigns, for more than two centuries, gave law to India; that is, from the first invasion of Sultan Mahmud, in the year 1000, to the defeat of Gelaleddin, by Gengis Khan, on the banks of the Indus, in 1221 of our æra,—having noticed the principal events in the life of that celebrated conqueror, and traced the history of his successors down to Timur Bec, I shall direct my attention to a more particular review of the domestic history of India; and from the ample sources in my possession, record the history of what Mr. Orme calls the first dynasty of Mohammedan kings of Delhi. This dynasty of Afghan emperors, commencing in the person of Cothbeddin-Ibek, and ending in Mahmud, dethroned by Timur, will carry us down to the year 1398, in which year that

great founder of the Mogul empire, in India, erected the Tartarian standard on the imperial towers of Delhi. "There are two celebrated histories," says Sir W. Jones, "of the life of Tamerlane; one in Persian, the other in Arabic; both of them written with all the pomp and elegance of the Asiatic style; in the first, the Tartarian conqueror is represented as a liberal, benevolent, and illustrious, prince; in the second, as deformed and impious, of a low birth and detestable principles. It seems difficult, at first, to reconcile this contradiction; but the difficulty vanishes, when we learn, that great part of the Persian history was composed under the inspection of Tamerlane himself, and received only the polish of language from the pen of Ali Yezdi; and that the Arabian author bore the most inveterate hatred against that monarch." By Ali Yezdi, Sir William means Sherifeddin, who was thus called from Yezd, a city of Persia, where he was born; and by the Arabian author, Ebn Arabshah, of whom the learned Golius gave an edition in Arabic, and M. Vatier, a French version. The impartial historian, however, can only collect the truth from a diligent attention to both histories; and it is my intention to give the substance of each, on the leading traits of his character.

It seems surprising, considering the importance of the subject, that so scanty a memoir, relative to the great event of Timur's invasion, and of the route pursued by that conqueror, from Delhi to the Straits of Kupele, is inserted in the Indian history of Ferishtah. Of the work now offered to the public, this portion will necessarily be not the least interesting, and it will principally be taken from the two histories above mentioned, both of which are in my possession, and from Timur's own "Institutes;" published in Arabic and English, by Dr. White. To render this account at once satisfactory and perspicuous, entertaining and instructive, I mean to bestow upon it the most assiduous and laborious attention. What historian, indeed, can avoid being animated, whilst he reviews the

mighty exploits of the great Timur, and records acts of generosity and valour, without parallel in the ample page of history. From the military maxims by which the Tartars were guided in carrying on war, though these acts were sometimes stained with a tinge of barbarity, yet Timur far surpassed both Alexander and Cæsar, as well in the vast extent of his empire, as in the boundless diffusion of his munificence. I feel an ardent desire of public applause enkindled in my mind, and I am impatient to plunge into this most interesting and splendid period of Asiatic history. But, before I can arrive at its commencement, a tedious and barren waste must be toiled over; and, indeed, from the death of Timur, till the expulsion of Baber by the Usbecks, great and almost insuperable difficulties will again arise, in the attempt to preserve the connecting chain of history between his descendents, who reigned in Grand Tartary, and the princes of Hindostan. All that we know for certain, from the few scanty and precarious fragments of history in our possession, chiefly to be found in Mirkhond, Herbelot, and the continuation of Arabshah's Life of Timur, is, that the Indian dominions were, in some degree, dependent on the Tartar emperors, who, to overawe those distant provinces, constantly kept a numerous body of cavalry at Gazna, or Candahar, at all times ready to exact the tribute, to extinguish the flame of rising rebellion, and pour, when necessary, their vengeance on that devoted country. For the clearer elucidation of the domestic history of India, during this period, Ferishtah will be of great and important advantage. Timur appointed no regular king to govern Hindostan; but by this author we are informed, that Chizer, whom he had stationed in the soubah of Multan, and its dependencies, rose by degrees, after the destruction of the weak Mahmud, and his weaker successor Lodi, to the imperial dignity, and founded another dynasty of Patan kings of Delhi. This dynasty flourished, with little interruption from the Tartar monarchs, from the death of Timur, in 1405, till the

fifth invasion of Hindostan, by the great, the politic, the immortal Baber, whose chequered life was equally distinguished by glory and misfortune; and who, in a pitched battle, fought in 1526, totally defeated Sultan Ibrahim Lodi, at the head of an army of 100,000 Afghans. Baber, more justly than Timur, may be called the genuine founder of the Mogul dynasty in India; as from him, in regular lineal succession, descended that glorious race of kings, who governed India, for the space of near two centuries, with wisdom unequalled, with moderation unprecedented, and with justice hardly impeachable.

Baber was not less eminent as a scholar than as a warrior: he wrote the commentaries of his own life and actions, called Vakeat Baberi, mentioned in Fraser's Catalogue of Oriental Manuscripts; containing "a full account of his battles in Tartary and India; a correct description of India; the soil, climate, and the manners of the people; a list of the several powers who then possessed India, &c. &c." From the Vakeat Baberi now deposited among the Bodleian manuscripts, and originally written in the Mogul language, but translated into Persian, in the reign of Akber, by Khan Khanan, will be extracted a faithful history of this illustrious character, who mounted the throne of the Tartarian empire at twelve years old, and lived to see the new empire, which he had founded in Hindostan, established in peace, and rising in renown.

Pursuing the regular course of our history, and referring constantly to the dates of Fraser, as the most accurate chronological statement of Indian events of that period, in our possession, after Baber, the chequered life of Homaion, distinguished, in a great degree, like that of Baber, by alternate triumph and depression, will engage our attention. In this life of Homaion, and in those of Sheer Shah, Selim, Mohammed, and Ibrahim, three successive monarchs of Patan extraction, who usurped the Mogul throne, I shall have occasion once more to compare Ferishtah with the Persian history,

as it was entirely owing to the vigorous assistance of Tahmas, the Persian monarch, to whom Homaion in his misfortunes fled, that the royal exile was enabled to recover possession of the empire of Timur, or rather of his father Baber. As, about this period, the affairs of the peninsula of India, and the settlement of the Europeans on its coast, will more immediately come under consideration, I shall present my readers with a concise, but authentic, history, of the gradual rise, to eminence and power, of all those European nations who successively established themselves under those emperors in India, from the first landing of the Portuguese at Calicut, to the present day. I shall be particularly attentive to mark the gradations by which the HONOURABLE EAST-INDIA COMPANY OF GREAT BRITAIN have risen to their present exalted state of power and splendour in that country; and I solemnly protest that nothing dictated by party consideration shall find its way into these sheets; but, that I will inviolably follow the duty of an impartial narrator, and religiously adhere to the grand outlines of historical truth.

The whole life of the illustrious hero who succeeded Homaion is a continued series of great and shining events. The annals of Akber may be justly styled the annals of glory. Equally great in the council and in the field, the zealous patron of genius, and the munificent rewarder of literary merit, he sat on the throne of Hindostan, which he ascended at the early age of thirteen, during a period of fifty years, the most splendid in the history of the Mogul dynasty. The life of Akber, in Ferishtah, is a professed translation of the "Akber Namma," written by Abul Fazil, secretary to that emperor, the most elegant writer of India. I have not contented myself, however, with the information to be gleaned from that work, but for the more ample illustration of the events of his reign, have taken a very extensive range through Asiatic annals; and trust that I have concentrated, into one point of view, whatever, relative to Akber, is to be found in the historians and travellers of the last

century, or of the present, that can at all be considered as important, or worthy of that distinguished and immortal character.

With the life of Akber, the Indian history of Ferishtah concludes; but Mr. Gladwin, in his recently published life of the Emperor, Jehaun Geer, as well as many other Oriental scholars have supplied ample materials for the reigns of his successors, down to Aurengzeb.

Aurengzeb, who died in the year 7 of the last century, left the richest and most powerful empire in the world to be rent asunder and convulsed to its very centre by the ambitious contentions of his surviving offspring. India had not for ages seen two such immense armies assembled on her plains, as those which accompanied to the field his sons Azem Shah and Mohammed Mauzim, the rival competitors for his vacant throne. The black and aggravated crimes by which the father himself ascended to empire, seem to have been avenged by heaven in the successive destruction of his immediate descendants.

From the death of the victorious Mauzim to the irruption from Persia, in 1738, there occurs a period of Indian history, the events of which it is painful to record,—a period deeply stained with blood, and marked by many progressive scenes of national calamity, the effect of that general anarchy and that uncontrolled spirit of faction which diffused itself among the Omras at the court of Delhi. From this melancholy æra, the page of the Mogul history hastens rapidly to its close, and the scene grows gradually darker, till at length it is extinguished in tenfold and total gloom. Indeed, of the Tartarian empire, in India, which flourished in its proudest zenith under the great Aurengzeb, it can hardly with propriety be said that it *gradually declined:* for, as no succeeding emperor arose, endowed with the same great military talents to defend, and animated by the same enlarged views of policy to govern, its vast extent, that empire may, with more precision, be represented as rushing at once, by its own enormous weight, into general and irretrievable ruin.

The scene of desolation and horror that commenced under the avaricious Nadir Shah, was finally completed by the ferocious Abdallah, who, after plundering the treasury of his master, led back his insatiable Afghans to Delhi, to divide the remaining spoil, and riot on the refuse of the feast. In the general plunder the Mahrattas and the Rohillas (another tribe of Afghans) have since largely participated, and, at this day, hardly a vestige remains of that mighty empire, which was founded by the illustrious Timur, and established by the persevering fortitude of Baber, which derived its most permanent column of glory from the wise regulations of Akber, and was carried to its greatest extent by the sword of the dauntless and politic Aurengzeb.

In contemplating the various and astonishing revolutions which have, within the last century, taken place throughout the whole continent of India, a wide and almost boundless range is opened to the historian. The principal events, so interesting and multifarious, that are comprised within this period, and have led to those revolutions I shall endeavour to record with fidelity, and to arrange in a regular and connected manner. Amidst the necessary abridgment of so vast a mass of historical information, perspicuity will be my chief aim, and I have spared neither labour nor expense to procure authentic documents. But, above all, in my relation of the transactions of the BRITISH NATION IN INDIA, it will be my highest ambition to preserve the character of an unbiassed and impartial historian, totally free from the violence of either party, without the temporizing servility that disgusts, and the intemperate warmth that offends. It is my fixed resolution to adhere solely to the grand outlines of *historical truth*, by whose awful dictates I mean on all occasions inflexibly to abide; all other influence the historian should disdain, all other praise is far below his notice, and merits only contempt.

CHAPTER II.

Amidst the Distractions that succeeded the Death of Alexander, the Indian Provinces are rent from the Macedonian Empire.—The History of Sandracottus, or Chandragupta, according both to classical and native Historians.—The Indian Geography of Strabo and Arrian reconciled to Sanscreet Topography.—Seleucus having at length recovered Babylon, takes Advantage of a Moment of temporary Repose from the protracted Contests with his Rivals, the Generals of Alexander, to march an Army into India; but finding Sandracottus in great Strength, and being recalled to the Field of his former Glory, enters into Compact with that Usurper, and restores the ancient Limits of India.—The great Exertions of Ptolemy Soter, and Ptolemy Philadelphus, in Egypt, to make that Country the Centre of the Indian Commerce.

THE power which the Greeks, by their superior military skill and valour, had obtained in India was nearly as rapidly subverted as it was gained. A young and daring soldier of fortune, who had made some deserters of that nation useful in his elevation to empire, gradually collected together an immense army, instructed them, as far as the genius and prejudices of the Indians would admit of such instruction, in the Greek method of attack and defence, and drove the Macedonians everywhere before him, retook all their fortresses, and finally delivered his country from the Macedonian yoke. This was the celebrated *Sandracottus* of the Greek historians, a name corrupted from CHANDRA-GUPTA.

Justin, after whom and Arrian I write the name Sandracottus, has the following curious story concerning this warlike chief. He

tells us, that he was humili genere natus—*of a low descent*, which agrees very well with the Sanscreet account of his maternal ancestry, but not with what follows; for he adds, that, when a youth, he was in the camp of Alexander, and had the misfortune, by some presumptuous act, indicative of his future greatness and independence, to offend that prince, who commanded him to be put to death. The infliction of this sentence Sandracottus avoided by a precipitate flight, and in that flight being overcome with heat and fatigue, in the midst of a lonely forest, he lay down, and, while he slept, a lion of a vast size came to him, licked off the reeking sweat from his youthful limbs, and, when he awoke from his repose, left him, without offering him the smallest injury.* Whence Justin, or his original, Trogus Pompeius, collected this story, cannot be ascertained; but it savours very much of Indian romance, and possibly may be inserted in some native account of Chandra-gupta. It accounts, however, for his determined aversion to the Greeks; for he is said immediately to have collected from all quarters a band of desperadoes, who made frequent inroads on the Macedonian camp; and these by degrees increasing to an immense army, he attacked their colonies, and finally effected their expulsion from India. The same author tells us, that a wild elephant of uncommon magnitude and ferocity used frequently to come to him out of the woods, pay his obeisance, and suffer him, before his troops, to mount his back with all the docility of the tamest of those animals.†

From the above circumstances it is evident that some of the Greek writers are guilty of a great error, when they represent Sandracottus as exalted to the throne when Alexander was advancing towards the Ganges. The name of the reigning prince was Nanda, lineally descended, by his father's side, from the ancient kings, who had reigned in Maghada, or South Bahar, from the days of Creeshna, but by his mother's side, whose name was Mura, and

* Justin. lib. xv. cap. 4. edit. variorum. † Ibid.

was a female slave of the Sudra tribe, that high descent was in a great degree disgraced.

Mura had many children, and they were called from that mother by the general appellation of MAURYA. This word in Sanscreet is also unfortunately used to signify a *barber*, and hence it was contemptuously said, alluding to his low extraction on the mother's side, that a *barber* had usurped the Indian throne: this mutilated account was heard and recorded by the Greeks, as a fact. Mr. Wilford has detailed, from native authorities, many curious particulars concerning this hero, and has taken great pains to correct the geography of Strabo and Arrian, in their attempts to describe the exact limits of his kingdom, and the precise situation of his capital. Let us first attend to the geographical, and afterwards to the interesting historical, detail.

King Nanda is said to have reigned over the Prasii and the Gangarides. The Sanscreet name of the country is PRACHI, meaning *the east;* whence the Greek Prasii was obviously formed; and, properly, it was intended to comprehend the whole country from Allahabad, situated on the conflux of the Ganges and Jumna, to the most eastern limits of India. It included also the fertile province of Bengal, known in Sanscreet by the appellation of *Gancara-desa;* whence the Greeks formed Gangarides. The Pali-bothra of Greek writers, where Megasthenes resided so long, is ascertained by our author to have occupied the site on which Raj-mahal now stands, and the Sanscreet term is Bali-putra, the habitation of the children of Bali; having been taken by the hero Bali-Rama, the brother of Creeshna. The river Erannoboas, near the confluence of which with the Ganges, Megasthenes, in Arrian, informs us that city stood, and to identify which has perplexed all the commentators, is discovered to be that now called the Coosey, having been thus denominated from the Sanscreet epithet of *Hiran-ya-baha*, or *gold-washing*, from its rolling down particles of gold.

The above might have been the limits of Nanda's dominions, but Sandracottus, doubtless, greatly enlarged them, and indeed must have extended them westward very near to the Indus, since the dread of the formidable army which he had assembled, prevented Seleucus Nicator, when he had passed over that river with intent to reconquer the Panjab, from penetrating into the country to any distance beyond its eastern bank. Northward, his empire probably extended to the great range that separates Hindostan from Tartary, and therefore he must have been sovereign of all Upper Hindostan.

According to Plutarch also, Sandracottus, when a youth, had been in Alexander's camp, and was heard to say, that if the Macedonians had pushed on their conquests to the Ganges they would probably have been successful, notwithstanding the immense army opposed to him; as king Nanda, who then reigned over the Prasii, though wise and valiant in his youth, had in his old age grown into contempt and general hatred, from his cruelty and tyranny. All this is amply confirmed by accounts preserved in India of the events of that period, for the following is Mr. Wilford's relation of this important revolution, that raised Sandracottus to the imperial diadem; a narration which I scarcely know how to analyze, as there is an apparent contradiction in some of the circumstances of it, and therefore present it unabridged to the reader.

" Chandra-Gupta, or he who was saved by the interposition of Lunus or the Moon, is called also Chandra in a poem quoted by Sir William Jones. The Greeks call him Sandracuptos, Sandracottos, and Androcottos. Sandracottos is generally used by the historians of Alexander; and Sandracuptos is found in the works of Athenæus. Sir William Jones, from a poem written by Somadeva, and a tragedy, called the Coronation of Chandra, or Chandra-Gupta, discovered that he really was the Indian king mentioned by the historians of Alexander, under the name of Sandracottos. These two poems I have not been able to procure; but I have found another

dramatic piece, intitled Mudra-Rácshasa, or the Seal of Rácshasa, which is divided into two parts: the first may be called the Coronation of Chandra-Gupta, and the second the Reconciliation of Chandra-Gupta with Mantri-Ráchshasa, the prime minister of his father.

"The history of Chandra-Gupta is related, though in few words, in the Vishnu-purána, the Bhagawat, and two other books, one of which is called Brahatcatha, and the other is a lexicon called Camandaca: the two last are supposed to be about six or seven hundred years old.

"In the Vishnu-purána we read, 'unto Nanda shall be born nine sons; Cotilya, his minister shall destroy them, and place Chandra-Gupta on the throne.'

"In the Bhagawat we read, 'from the womb of Sudri, Nanda shall be born. His eldest son will be called Sumalya, and he shall have eight sons more; these, a Bráhmen (called Cotilya, Vatsayana, and Chanacya in the commentary) shall destroy, after them a Maurya shall reign in the Cali-yug. This Bráhmen will place Chandra-Gupta on the throne.' In the Brahatcutha it is said, that this revolution was effected in seven days, and the nine children of Nanda put to death. In the Camandaca, Chanacyas is called Vishnu-Gupta. The following is an abstract of the history of Chandra-Gupta from the Mudra-Rácshasa:

"Nanda, king of Prachi, was the son of Maha Nandi, by a female slave of the Sudra tribe: hence Nanda was called a Sudra. He was a good king, just and equitable, and paid due respect to the Bráhmens: he was avaricious, indeed, but he respected his subjects. He was originally king of Maghada, now called South Bahar, which had been in the possession of his ancestors since the days of Creeshna; by the strength of his arm he subdued all the kings of the country, and like another Parasu-Ráma destroyed the remnants of the Kettris. He had two wives, Ratnavati and Mura. By the

first he had nine sons, called the Sumalyadicas, from the eldest, whose name was Sumalya; by Mura he had Chandra-Gupta, and many others, who were known by the general appellation of Mauryas, because they were born of Mura.

" Nanda, when far advanced in years, was taken ill suddenly, and to all appearance died. He soon revived, to the great joy of his subjects: but his senses appeared to be greatly deranged, for he no longer spoke or acted as before. While some ascribed the monarch's imbecility to the effects of a certain poison, which is known to impair the faculties at least, when it proves too weak to destroy the life, of those to whom it is administered, Mantri-Rácshasa, his prime minister was firmly persuaded, according to a notion very prevalent among the Hindus, that upon his master's death, some magician had entered into the lifeless corpse which was now re-animated and actuated by his presence. He, therefore, secrectly ordered, that strict search might be made for the magician's own body; for, as according to the tenets of their superstition, this would necessarily be rendered invisible, and continue so, as long as its spirit informed another body; so he naturally concluded the magician had enjoined one of his faithful followers to watch it, until the dissolution of the spell should end the trance. In consequence of these orders, two men being discovered keeping watch over a corpse on the banks of the Ganges, he ordered them to be seized and thrown into the river, and caused the body to be burnt immediately. It proved to belong to Chandra-das, a king of a small domain in the western part of India beyond the Vindhyan hills, the capital whereof is called Vicat-palli. This prince having been obliged to save himself by flight, from the Yavanas, or Greeks, who had dispossessed him of his kingdom, had assumed, with the garb of a penitent, the name of Suvid'ha. Mantri-Rácshasa having thus punished the magician for his presumption, left the country.

" When Nanda recovered from his illness he became a tyrant, or,

rather, having entrusted Sacatara, his prime minister, with the reins of government, the latter ruled with absolute sway. As the old king was one day hunting with his minister, towards the hills to the south of the town, he complained of his being thirsty, and quitting his attendants, repaired with Sacatara to a beautiful reservoir, under a large spreading tree, near a cave in the hills, called Patalcandira, or the passage leading to the infernal regions; there Sacatara flung the old man into the reservoir, and threw a large stone upon him. In the evening he returned to the imperial city, bringing back the king's horse, and reported, that his master had quitted his attendants and rode into the forest; what was become of him he knew not, but he had found his horse grazing under a tree. Some days after Sacatara, with Vacranara, one of the secretaries of state, placed Ugradhanwa, one of the younger sons of Nanda, on the throne.

" The young king being dissatisfied with Sacatara's account of his father's disappearance, set about farther inquiries during the minister's absence, but these proving as little satisfactory, he assembled the principal persons of his court, and threatened them all with death, if, in three days, they failed to bring him certain intelligence what was become of his father. This menace succeeded, for, on the fourth day, they reported, that Sacatara had murdered the old king, and that his remains were concealed under a stone in the reservoir near Patalcandira; Ugradhanwa immediately sent people with camels, who returned in the evening, with the body, and the stone that had covered it. Sacatara confessed the murder, and was thereupon condemned to be shut up with his family in a narrow room, the door of which was walled up, and a small opening only left for the conveyance of their scanty allowance. They all died in a short time, except the youngest son Vicatara, whom the young king ordered to be released, and took into his service. But Vicatara meditated revenge; and the king having directed him

to call some Bráhman to assist at the sraddha he was going to perform, in honour of his ancestor, Vicatara, brought an ill-natured priest, of a most savage appearance, in the expectation that the king might be tempted, from disgust at so offensive an object, to offer some affront to the Bráhmen, who, in revenge, would denounce a curse against him. The plan succeeded to his wish: the king ordered the priest to be turned out, and the latter laid a dreadful imprecation upon him, swearing at the same time, that he would never tie up his shicá or lock of hair, till he had effected his ruin. The enraged priest then ran out of the palace exclaiming, whoever wishes to be king let him follow me. Chandra-Gupta immediately arose, with eight of his friends, and went after him. They crossed the Ganges, with all possible dispatch, and visited the king of Népal, called Parváteswara, or the lord of the mountains, who received them kindly. They entreated him to assist them with troops and money, Chandra-Gupta promising, at the same time, to give him the half of the empire of Prachi, in case they should be successful. Parváteswara answered, that he could not bring into the field a sufficient force to effect the conquest of so powerful an empire; but, as he was on good terms with the Yavans or Greeks, the Sacas or Indo-Scythians, the people of Camboja or Gayni, the Ciratas or inhabitants of the mountains to the eastward of Népal, he could depend on their assistance. Ugradhanwa enraged at the behaviour of Chandra-Gupta, ordered all his brothers to be put to death.

"The matter, however, is related differently in other books, which state, that Nanda, seeing himself far advanced in years, directed that after his decease, his kingdom should be equally divided between the Sumalyadicas, and that a decent allowance should be given to the Mauryas or children of Mura; but the Sumalyadicas being jealous of the Mauryas, put them all to death, except Chandra-

Gupta, who, being saved through the protection of Lunus, out of gratitude assumed the name of Chandra-Gupta, or saved by the moon: but to resume the narrative,

" Parváteswara took the field with a formidable army, accompanied by his brother Virochana and his own son Malaya-Cetu. The confederates soon came in sight of the capital of the king of Prachi, who put himself at the head of his forces, and went out to meet them. A battle was fought, wherein Ugradhanwa was defeated, after a dreadful carnage, in which he himself lost his life. The city was immediately surrounded, and Sawartha-Siddhi, the governor, seeing it impossible to hold out against so powerful an enemy, fled to the Vindhyan mountains, and became an anchoret. Rácshasa went over to Parváteswara.* Chandra-Gupta, being firmly established on the throne, destroyed the Sumalyadicas, and dismissed the allies, after having liberally rewarded them for their assistance: *but he kept the Yavans or Greeks,* and refused to give the half of the kingdom of Prachi to Parváteswara, who, being unable to enforce his claim, returned to his own country meditating vengeance. By the advice of Rácshasa he sent a person to destroy Chandra-Gupta; but Vishnu-Gupta, suspecting the design, not only rendered it abortive, but turned it back upon the author, by gaining over the assassin to his interest, whom he engaged to murder Parváteswara, which the villain accordingly effected. Rácshasa urged Malaya-Cetu to revenge his father's death; but, though pleased with the suggestion, he declined the enterprize, representing to his counsellor, that Chandra-Gupta *had a large body of Yavans or Greeks in his pay,* had fortified his capital, and placed a numerous garrison in it, with guards of elephants at all the gates; and finally, by the defection of their allies, who were either overawed by his power, or conciliated by his

* Rácshasa, on hearing of the death of Sacatara, returned, and became prime minister of Ugradhanwa.

favour, had so firmly established his authority, that no attempt could be made against him with any prospect of success.

" In the mean time Vishnu-Gupta, being conscious that Chandra-Gupta could never be safe so long as he had to contend with a man of Rácshasa's abilities, formed a plan to reconcile them, and this he effected in the following manner: there was in the capital a respectable merchant or banker, called Chandana-Das, an intimate friend of Rácshasa. Vishnu-Gupta advised Chandra-Gupta to confine him with his whole family: some time after, he visited the unfortunate prisoner, and told him that the only way to save himself and family from imminent destruction, was to effect a reconciliation between the king and Rácshasa, and that if he would follow his advice, he would point out to him the means of doing it. Chandana-Das assented, though, from the known inveteracy of Rácshasa against Chandra-Gupta, he had little hope of success. Accordingly, he and Vishnu-Gupta betook themselves privately to a place in the northern hills, where Ráchasa had a country seat, to which he used to retire from the bustle of business. There they erected a large pile of wood, and gave out that they intended to burn themselves. Rácshasa was astonished when he heard of his friends' resolution, and used every endeavour to dissuade them from it; but Chandana-Das told him, he was determined to perish in the flames with Vishnu-Gupta, unless he would consent to be reconciled to Chandra-Gupta. In the mean time the prince arrived with a retinue of five hundred men; when, ordering them to remain behind, he advanced alone towards Rácshasa, to whom he bowed respectfully and made an offer of delivering up his sword. Rácshssa remained a long time inexorable, but at last, overcome by the joint entreaties of Vishnu-Gupta and Chandana-Das, he suffered himself to be appeased, and was reconciled to the king, who made him his prime minister. Vishnu-Gupta, having succeeded in bringing about this reconciliation, withdrew to resume his former occupations; and Chandra-

Gupta reigned afterwards many years, with justice and equity, and adored by his subjects."*

Of all the cities erected by Alexander in Northern India, and in the higher Asia, and of all the numerous colonies which he planted in them, in order to cherish an intimate connection between the Indian and other conquered nations, few seem to have flourished for any extended period after his decease; for those cities, afterwards distinguished by Grecian names, were for the most part built and repeopled by Seleucus, in the higher Asia, who derived from his new conquest of those regions, the illustrious name of Nicator. Many of the soldiers left behind in the fortified places were far advanced in years, many were dreadfully maimed; these in the course of nature would soon decay, and those who had health and strength to return to Macedon, in all probability returned thither, or to the more southern districts of Persia, and either settled peaceably under the government of Seleucus, or served in his armies. Taxiles and Porus, who, on Alexander's death, his captains (undetermined in almost every thing besides), resolved should remain sovereigns of the respective domains to which he had appointed them, together with all the additional provinces annexed to their respective kingdoms, were probably permitted to continue so, because they were unable to displace them, and at best were but nominally, if at all, dependent on the power of his successors. Mr. Wilford informs us, that in the Vishnu Purana, eight Grecian princes are said to have reigned over part of India, and conjectures that these must have been the Grecian kings of Bactria, of whom we shall have occasion to speak hereafter.

This is possible, and indeed probable, but by them may also be meant the Greek dynasty of princes, which seems to have been established, even in the time of Alexander, in the southern provinces towards the mouth of the Indus, and along the western coast of the

* Asiatic Researches, Vol. V. p. 268.

Peninsula. For we are informed by Arrian, or whoever was the author of the Periplus, that down even to his time ancient Greek drachms were frequently to be met with in the vicinity of Barygaza, or Baroach, with Greek inscriptions; and since he particularly specifies those inscribed with the names of Apollodotus and Menander,* two Greek princes, and positively affirms those princes to have reigned in that southern province of India, it cannot be doubted that in the same region considerable remains of the Macedonian power existed for several ages, probably till the utter extinction, by the Romans, of the greater dynasties of Egypt and Syria. The interests of commerce required that this power should be kept up in considerable vigour, to afford it protection; and they were too remote from the usurpation of Sandracottus, to have much to apprehend from that prince.

The career of the Macedonian conqueror over the mountainous districts of the Northern Asia was rapid and destructive; he passed them with the transient and portentous glare of the comet, but the south was long illumined by the more permanent and genial light shed by the glory which his arms acquired on the shores of the Indus, and in the Pattalene.

According to Justin's statement of the division of the empire of Alexander, to Pithon, son of Agenor, was assigned the general superintendance of the colonies distributed over the Northern India. This Pithon is called the son of Agenor to distinguish him from that other Pithon who, in the Excerpta from the lost books of Arrian,† preserved by Photius, the learned patriarch of Constantinople, in the time of Julian, is said to have been the son of Crateas, and to have had the command of Media and the Superior Asia, quite to the Caspian gates. Concerning any exploits, however, of this Indian

* Arrian's Periplus, p. 27.

† Vide Arrian de Rebus post Alexand. gestis, in Excerptis Photii, p. 215 and 223; edit. Steph. 1612.

præfect, nothing particular has descended down to posterity. Whether, therefore, he thought it prudent to retire southward, and seek the protection of the dynasty of princes who I conjecture to have settled in the Pattalene; whether he turned traitor, and joined Sandracottus with his Greek battalions, as many Greeks are in the native histories affirmed to have done; or was otherwise swallowed up in the vortex of the vast revolution that necessarily attended that chieftain's exaltation to empire, cannot, from the utter obscurity of the annals of this period, be now ascertained. Taxiles and Porus, if not entirely subjugated by the usurper, who is said not only to have driven out the Greeks, but also their allies, were probably compelled to temporize, and become the reluctant vassals of the king of the Gangaridæ. They seem, however, at a future period, to have resumed their independence, and to have renewed their friendly correspondence with the Greeks, since Megasthenes, on his visits to India, was hospitably received in their respective capitals. At present the torrent of his power was too violent to be resisted; nor can we wonder when we learn from that writer, in Strabo,* that Sandracottus had collected an army of six hundred thousand men, the individuals composing which were in so exact a state of subordination, that they were known to march through a country without offering the smallest molestation either to the quiet or property of the inhabitants. To such an overwhelming force every thing must have given way, and the higher India have continued in the undisturbed possession of that chief during the greater part of the twelve years that intervened between the death of Alexander, and the recovery of Babylon by Seleucus Nicator, at which period, properly, the reign and æra of the Seleucidæ commenced. Our present business, therefore, is to bring into one focal point of view all the scattered rays of information concerning India, in our power to collect, during the period of two hundred and fifty-one years which that dynasty reigned, with various

* Strabonis Geograph. lib. xv. p. 709.

fortune, over Syria and the East, till the expulsion from its throne of Antiochus Asiaticus, the last sovereign of this illustrious line, and the final conquest of this part of Asia by Pompey the Great. India and its rich and fertile provinces were too alluring a spoil to all the successive warriors, who, during that dynasty, contended with the Seleucidæ for the empire of the Northern Asia, to be ever wholly out of sight of their ambition, and we shall see the Parthian, the Bactrian, and finally the Tartar, armies, successively devastating that beautiful territory.

As Alexander, at his decease, was the undoubted sovereign, by conquest, of Western India, partitioned out by himself into various præfectures, and as his children were consequently the heirs of its throne, some farther particulars concerning his family may possibly be expected in these pages, from the professed historian of Indian events; but the terrible catastrophe that befel his infant family, owing to the ambitious contests, and diabolical ingratitude of the chief officers, who divided his vast empire among them, is already too well known, and has been too often detailed, to be repeated with propriety in these pages. The twelve fatal years immediately subsequent to his death, in which Asia and Egypt were deluged with the blood of his bravest battalions, had afforded leisure for maturing the projects of the not less ambitious Chandra-Gupta, and establishing his empire upon a solid foundation. When Seleucus, however, in consequence of his recovery of Babylon from Antigonus, found himself firmly seated in that government, and at leisure to extend his conquests northward, he advanced with a powerful army into Media, where he met in battle, and with his own hand slew, Nicanor, the general sent against him by his potent rival Antigonus. Thence he led his victorious troops into Persia, which properly formed a part of the Babylonian government, but had revolted, which he also subdued; and pursuing his triumphant progress through the provinces of Bactria and Hyrcania, again reduced them beneath the

Grecian yoke, as well as all the other provinces lying on the west of the river Indus, which had been rent from it during the troubles that had convulsed the empire since the death of Alexander. But the richest portion of his Asiatic præfecture, could it be recovered, lay on the other side of that river; and, elated with his past success, he now prepared to pass the stream, and retrace the steps of his great master. The sight of a river on whose shores Alexander had gained such high renown, a renown in which Seleucus himself had so largely participated, must have inflamed him with ardour to obtain new victories on the soil of India; and probably a general so skilful in war, and inured to its toils, had formed hopes of succeeding where Alexander had failed; of reaching the distant Ganges itself, and recruiting the exhausted treasury of Babylon with the wealth of the capital of the Prasii. The general character of Taxiles and Porus, the generous and friendly conduct of the former, during the preceding invasion, and the strong tie of gratitude for life and empire preserved, by which the latter was bound to the Macedonians, induced him to believe, that if the necessity of circumstances had compelled them to join the usurper, his army would meet with no long or very vigorous resistance from those princes, through whose kingdoms his direct route lay to the Ganges; and if it should be otherwise, his battalions consisted of the flower of the Grecian army in Asia, to whom their opposition would necessarily be unavailing.

That those princes did still retain their ancient friendly sentiments towards their Grecian allies may be reasonably concluded from Seleucus's passing the Indus, which he immediately did, without opposition. When arrived with his army on the opposite banks, he first learned, probably from those princes, the true extent of the power and resources of Sandracottus; that he was equally brave and expert in war, that he observed the Greek discipline and mode of fighting, that his army consisted, in horse and foot, of six hundred thousand

men, with a prodigious train of elephants; with which he had absolutely subjugated all the higher India, and that he was rapidly advancing to give battle to Seleucus. On this intelligence, the ardour of the invader was considerably checked; and more particularly as at this instant of time messengers arrived in his camp, from the confederated governors at war with Antigonus, warmly soliciting his return to the western provinces of his government, and the union of his whole force with Ptolemy, in order to effect their rescue from the overbearing violence of Antigonus and his son Demetrius, who were, in concert, ravaging the Lesser Asia, and had already subjugated to their controul the principal cities of desolated Greece. Seleucus was inflamed with rage at these tidings of the success of his haughty rival; and the subjugation of Sandracottus, were it even practicable, immediately became only a secondary consideration to a mind stung with jealousy, and irritated to vengeance. Defeat, or even repulse, on the plains of India, would not only be highly disgraceful, but might be attended with utter ruin to his affairs; and therefore, after maturely considering the critical situation in which he stood, he deemed it far more prudent to enter upon immediate negotiation, than to engage in hazardous battle with so warlike and powerful a chieftain.

The Indian monarch too, notwithstanding his vast superiority in point of numbers, and though determined, at all hazards, to defend his newly-acquired dominions against foreign invasion, was too deeply impressed with a sense of Grecian skill and fortitude, animated and directed by so renowned a general, to entertain a wish of risking that success in a battle which he might, without the slightest hazard, obtain by negotiation. On being made acquainted, therefore, probably by Porus or Taxiles, with the altered sentiments of Seleucus, he listened with readiness to proposals for the amicable adjustment of their disputes; and ambassadors, in consequence, were mutually dispatched to settle between the contending sovereigns the

preliminaries, and fix the terms, of a lasting peace. Sandracottus must have been fully sensible of his great strength in the field, when he demanded, as we are informed * he did, that the barrier of the Indian empire should be again removed to its ancient limit, the Arbis, a river of Gedrosia, which was, in fact, requiring the surrender of many rich and fertile provinces to the west of the Indus, in return for five hundred of his best disciplined elephants, with which, on that condition being complied with, he promised to reinforce the army of Seleucus; and the latter, in agreeing to the demand, must either have seen the utter inability, under the present circumstances of his situation in regard to Antigonus, of defending them against the power of that successful usurper, or have felt the urgent want of a species of succour so highly in request at that time in the armies of Asia. Such, however, were the terms mutually agreed upon, and finally ratified: on the one side, the river Arbis was again allowed to be the western limit of India; and five hundred of the noblest elephants of its forests were delivered on the other. Very few particulars of this remote transaction have descended down to posterity; but from the friendship that afterwards subsisted between these monarchs, evidenced by the long residence of Megasthenes, in quality of ambassador from Seleucus, at the court of Palibothra, it is more than probable that an interview took place between them, and than such a meeting between two such distinguished characters of their day, nothing can be conceived more interesting; honourable and flattering, indeed, to the one, but truly degrading to the other: the young soldier of fortune ignominously ordered to be put to death by Alexander, stipulating with his most renowned general, for the surrender of all the forts and cities which Macedonian valour had won on Indian ground, on condition that the subverter of the power of Alexander, *in the east*, should furnish five hundred warlike elephants to crush the remainder of the brave veterans that

* Strabo, lib. xv. p. 687.

fought under his banner in the west. To cement more closely the connection between the two sovereigns, before they parted, Sandracottus, according to Strabo, received in marriage one of the daughters of Seleucus, in whose posterity the blood of the two families being thus united, was established a twofold and incontestible right to the throne of India. On this Mr. Wilford observes:

"It may be objected to the foregoing account, the improbability of a Hindu marrying the daughter of a Yavana, or, indeed, of any foreigner. On this difficulty I consulted the Pundits of Benares, and they all gave me the same answer; namely, that in the time of Chandra-Gupta the Yavanas were much respected, and were even considered as a sort of Hindus, though they afterwards brought upon themselves the hatred of that nation, by their cruelty, avarice, rapacity and treachery, in every transaction, while they ruled over the western parts of India; but that at any rate the objection did not apply to the case, as Chandra-Gupta himself was a Sudra, that is to say, of the lowest class. In the Vishnu-purána, and in the Bhagawat, it is recorded, that eight Grecian kings reigned over part of India. They are better known to us by the title of the Grecian kings of Bactriana. Arrian, in his Periplus, enumerating the exports from Europe to India, sets down as one article, beautiful virgins, who were generally sent to the market of Baroach. The Hindus acknowledged that, formerly, they were not so strict as they are at this day; and this appears, from their books, to have been the case. Strabo does not positively say that Chandra-Gupta married a daughter of Seleucus, but that Seleucus cemented the alliance he had made with him by connubial affinity, from which expression it might equally be inferred, that Seleucus married a daughter of Chandra-Gupta; but this is not so likely as the other; and it is probable the daughter of Seleucus was an illegitimate child, born in Persia, after Alexander's conquest of that country."

Many respectable writers, among whom are the Baron Montesquieu and M. Bayer, have been induced, by a passage in Pliny,* to suppose that Seleucus, in his Indian expedition, had penetrated far beyond the limits that bounded the march of Alexander, even to Palibothra, and the mouths of the Ganges. But the Roman author was doubtless deceived in his statement, and probably mistook the Itinerary of Megasthenes, or some other Greek traveller in India, for that of Seleucus. With the vast army, the immense resources, the military talents of Sandracottus, with the ample means which he possessed, of incessantly annoying and harassing the Grecian troops, the greater part of them would probably have perished by famine in that dreary desert of eleven days march, which, according to Curtius,† and as experienced by Timur, stretched from the Hyphasis to the Ganges; or had the imprudence of their general, in fact, led them to the mouths of the Ganges, they would probably have expiated their temerity by being driven into the ocean. But in other respects the account is utterly inadmissible. The critical situation of Seleucus, in regard to Antigonus, would not allow him leisure to have accomplished these feats, which must have taken up a very extended period. Had his army visited Palibothra, which implies the subjugation of its monarch, it would probably have returned home laden with a greater and nobler spoil than five hundred elephants; and the eastern regions of India being thus laid open to the exploring eyes of the Greeks, must have been better known and

* "Reliqua," says Pliny, "inde Seleuco Nicatori peragrata erant: ad Hesidrum 168 millia: Jomanem amnem tantundem: exemplaria aliqua adjiciunt quinque millia passuum: inde ad Gangem 112 millia: ad Rodapham 119 millia, alii 325 millia in hoc spatio produnt: ad Calanipaxa oppidum 168, alii 265 millia: inde ad confluentem Jomanis amnis et Gangis 725 millia, plerique adjiciunt 13 millia; ad oppidumque Palibothra 425: ad ostium Gangis 738 millia passuum.—Plinii Nat. Hist. lib. vi. cap. 17.

† Quintus Curtius, lib. ix. cap. 2.

better described in the pages of their historians and geographers, than they are in their authentic works that have descended to posterity.

After this compact and connubial affinity, Seleucus, with his army thus strongly fortified, repassed the Indus, and marching back with the utmost expedition into Assyria, began, in concert with Ptolemy, his ally, those vast preparations for a general attack, with their united forces, upon Antigonus; which, at the fatal battle of Ipsus, proved so utterly destructive to the latter. It is remarkable, that the Indian elephants brought into the field by Seleucus, to the amount of four hundred, in opposition to only seventy-five, which formed the train of Antigonus, were of the most essential service in deciding the fortune of the day; for when Demetrius, at the head of his father's numerous cavalry, was engaged in the hot pursuit of the routed cavalry of Seleucus, that experienced general interposed his elephants between the prince and the main body of the adverse army, and so completely cut him off from it, that he was not able to send any succour to Antigonus, already surrounded on all sides by the victorious foe; but still disdaining to yield, and, according to his last words preserved in Plutarch, on the very verge of death expressing aloud his confidence to his troops, that his beloved Demetrius would yet come to their rescue.* A shower of arrows, says the historian, immediately poured upon him, deprived him at once of hope and of life, and he fell from his horse prostrate on the ground. Thus perished this brave, but insatiably ambitious, commander, who had long aspired to the supreme sovereignty of the Eastern world. The death of Antigonus gave rise to a new partition of the empire of Alexander among his four great surviving captains, Ptolemy, Cassander, Lysimachus, and Seleucus; who, by mutual consent, added to their respective governments, those portions of the vast domain usurped by Antigonus, which lay most contiguous and convenient

* Plutarch, in Vita Demetrii.

to their own; and each of whom now assumed an imperial diadem, with all the other insignia and arrogant titles of Eastern royalty. Of this fourfold division, the portion enjoyed by Seleucus was by far the most extensive, comprehending not only Syria, properly so called, but all those rich provinces of the Upper Asia, which formed the ancient Persian empire; and extending from the Mediterranean, if not quite to the Indus, at least as near to the banks of that river as the line of demarcation, recently agreed upon by Seleucus and Sandracottus, permitted.

The succeeding interval from the desolating horrors of war that had so long ravaged Asia, was devoted by Seleucus to the adorning of his new empire with many great and magnificent works. The city of Seleucia, situated on the western banks of the Tigris, about forty miles from Babylon, and afterwards the rival of that vast metropolis in splendour and population; the still more renowned city of Antioch on the Orontes, so resplendent in beauty, grandeur, and wealth, as to be called for ages the *Queen of the East*, together with many other noble cities, the marts of commerce, and the seats of science, while the dynasty of the Seleucidæ flourished, were erected during this period. Seleucus, indeed, as far as the distractions of the times in which he lived would permit him, was a munificent patron of all the liberal arts and sciences. He was endowed not less with those amiable qualities that form the beneficent sovereign, than those that constitute the great general, and can alone be exerted amidst the turbulence of war. With a firm hand he held on high the balance of impartial justice, and with a jealous eye guarded the sanctities of religion. His deep political cast of character, and his thirst for useful knowledge, were evident in his sending Megasthenes to reside so long as his ambassador at the court of Sandracottus, to penetrate into the views and projects of that formidable usurper, to explore so distant and celebrated a region, and learn the natural and civil history of the country. Undoubtedly all this Megasthenes

diligently performed, and hence he was enabled to compose a history of India; of which, to the irreparable loss of posterity, since it contained many curious and authentic, though mixed with some romantic, facts, only a few scattered fragments are to be found in Arrian, Strabo, and other classical writers, who afterwards treated of Indian subjects. In this work, though it is acknowledged, that much of the marvellous abounds, especially in those parts that regard its natural history, yet his description of the customs and manners of the Brahmins and other inhabitants of the great city of Palibothra, and the geographical limits of the country, has been, for the most part, verified by the investigation and experience of the moderns; and in fact, though both Arrian and Strabo occasionally find vehement fault with Megasthenes, for his deviations from the line of probability, yet they both contain very large quotations from his writings. Of the singular customs, manners, laws, government, and geography of the country, and particularly of the famous metropolis just mentioned, with its prodigious fosse Εξαπλεθρον, or *of six acres*, its sixty-five gates, and its five hundred and seventy towers, very ample accounts may be found in the Indian Antiquities, which therefore need not be repeated in this place. With respect to Sandracottus himself, Megasthenes, as cited by his transcribers, has a few remarks,* which place his character in a very exalted point of view, when we consider the violent methods taken by him to obtain the empire of Hindostan, though he was certainly of the blood royal of India, and no son of a mean artificer. To the strictest discipline throughout his army, he added the most rigid economy in the expenditure of the public treasures. Though at the head of so vast an army, in obedience to the established laws and customs of his country, he meditated no offensive wars against his peaceable neighbours, no ambitious enlargement of the hereditary dominions of the Indian sovereigns

* Arrian in Indicis.

beyond the ancient limit of the river Arbis. We have read, also, in the Sanscreet accounts already cited, that he was "a prince of great justice and equity, and reigned many years, adored by his subjects." His empire too, must have been of far greater extent than that of his predecessors on the throne of India; since it comprehended not only many rich provinces lying on the east of the Ganges, but others stretching along the west bank of the Indus. Northwards it was bounded only by the Caucasian range; but how far its limits extended southward, at this early period, it is impossible to ascertain, as the Rajahs of the Peninsula probably still retained their independence in those mountain fortresses which covered the summits of the Gauts.

Let us now examine another assertion of Megasthenes, preserved, by Arrian, viz. that from Bacchus to Sandracottus, the Indians counted one hundred and fifty-three monarchs in regular descent, and that they reigned during a period of six thousand and forty-two years.* The Sanscreet records go so far towards a confirmation of this position, as to declare that Nanda, the father of Sandracottus, was originally king of Maghada, or South Bahar, *which had been in the possession of his ancestors ever since the days of Creeshna*, who, in fact, was the Indian Bacchus; but then the whole number of kings of the solar dynasty, from Deshwacu, or Cush, down to Nanda, according to Sir William Jones's list, scarcely exceeds one hundred, and the years can only be calculated from the deluge of Menu.† Hence, however, it is evident, that the royal line was continued unbroken to Chandra-Gupta, and that, though the youngest son of Nanda, and somewhat debased by birth, on the maternal side, he mounted the throne by the claim of blood.

Let us now return to the successors of Alexander, and having traced the progress of Seleucus, as well in glory as degradation, I mean, both in India and out of it, let us advert, for a moment, to

* Arrian in Indicis, cap. ix. † See this History, Vol. II. p. 58.

that illustrious character in antiquity, Ptolemy Lagus, who following up to maturity the vast plans of his master, in founding Alexandria, had rapidly advanced that capital, and indeed the whole kingdom, to a point of permanent grandeur and prosperity to which none of his competitors in fame, even ultimately, attained. The basis of that grandeur was more deeply laid, and more vigourously supported: equally great in the peaceful cabinet and on the warlike plain, skilful to project, and daring to execute, the genius of Ptolemy trampled on every difficulty, which nature and situation opposed to making Alexandria the mart of the universe; and, while he successfully combated his ambitious rivals on foreign ground, he relaxed not a moment in the prosecution at home of the great objects which he felt it equally a pleasure and a duty to perfect. In a desert of sand vast marble cisterns were formed, and canals sunk to convey and distribute the waters of the Nile. A double port, a stupendous mole, and a Pharos, the wonder of the world, rose amidst the din and distraction of arms. Edifices the most superb, a museum, a public library, a palace truly royal, and temples worthy of the gods, were erected with a celerity dictated by a generous love of science, and an ardent zeal for religion. In fine, all that an Alexander could wish, a Ptolemy faithfully accomplished. While the governments of his other captains were the seat and centre of revolutions, in Egypt there was stability and security: this circumstance, added to his wise and equitable administration of public affairs, induced all foreigners of merit, learned men and artificers; in particular those skilled in architecture or maritime affairs, who were most wanted and liberally rewarded, to resort in crouds to Egypt.

With the contests of the Ptolemies for dominion, by land, this history has little concern; those of Seleucus were noticed, because he was, for a time, the reputed sovereign of India, and seems never to have wholly relinquished his title to a tribute from that country. With the efforts of the former to wrest from the Phœnicians the

dominion of the sea, and with their commercial projects the Indian history of this period is particularly connected. One of the first objects of Ptolemy was to have a considerable maritime force, to promote and to protect the commerce which he resolved, by various channels, should flow into Egypt, but of that of India, as the most valuable, he was especially desirous. While Seleucus, therefore, was bartering away, for a train of stately elephants, his right to the territory of India, Ptolemy was assiduously labouring to secure to Egypt the productions of its soil. In this he partly succeeded, during his long, though troublesome, reign of thirty-nine years; but the honour of completing the undertaking was reserved for his successor.

Ptolemy Lagus died at the advanced age of eighty-four, and was succeeded by a son not less ardently desirous to fulfil the intentions of his wise father, than to carry to the highest degree of perfection the extensive plans of Alexander. To do this effectually, as far as lay in his power, and with a view to make the trade of Europe and Asia centre in the new capital of Alexandria, early in his reign Ptolemy Philadelphus undertook to cut a new canal one hundred cubits in breadth, and thirty in depth, between Arsinoe, situated on the most southern extremity of the Red Sea, near the site of the modern Suez, and the Pelusian branch of the Nile. A similar intention of uniting the Red Sea and the Nile formed a part of the ambitious projects for aggrandizing and enriching his nation, of a far more ancient sovereign of Egypt, Pharaoh Necho, in which, however, he was violently opposed by the whole order of the priesthood. For those sages were not only induced, by their theology, to dread the defilement of their sacred river by the waters of the Erythræan Sea, but, from their geographical knowledge, were filled with alarm, lest the whole country of Egypt, towards the Mediterranean, should be overwhelmed and turned into a stagnant lake, by the irruption of the former sea, which they conceived to roll on a more elevated bed. Necho, however, persevered in spite of all their remonstrances,

till seven years ineffectual toil, and the loss of 100,000 men, in that attempt, proved the impracticability of it. It remained in this unfinished state till the reign of Darius, of the Persian dynasty of Egyptian kings, who ordered it to be completed, but did not live to accomplish it; a task left for the superior vigour and industry of Philadelphus. Notwithstanding it is said, by Strabo,* to have been sufficiently broad for two vessels, of three ranks of oars, to sail abreast on it; to have had a commodious lock for keeping up the water to a proper height; and the length of it to be only an easy navigation of four days; for some reason or other the canal came into disuse, and the vast labour and expense of cutting through the isthmus of Suez were thrown away, since, in the time of Cleopatra, who, on the point of losing life and empire, would have gladly fled by this cut into the Arabian Gulph, it was found to be utterly impassable, even by light galleys. The labour of so many sovereigns, to complete this vast undertaking, has occasioned the canal itself to be called by geographers, and designated in our maps, THE CANAL OF THE KINGS.

Failing in this magnificent project, yet still resolved, if possible, to fix for ever to Alexandria the lucrative trade now vigorously carrying on between Egypt, the two Arabias, and India, Philadelphus immediately embarked in two other important and successful undertakings; the one was the building of a more powerful fleet than Egypt had ever yet been mistress of, and the other the opening a new road of communication from the Nile, directly across the desert to a part of the Red Sea, whence ships might pass, by a safe and short navigation, to the mouth of the gulf. For the numerous rocks and shoals that abound in the upper, or northern, part of that dangerous sea, added to the tempestuous and variable winds that agitate its surface, had, from the earliest periods, filled the bosom of the mariner with terror and alarms: as he descended down the gulf,

* Vide Strabo, lib. xvii. p. 753.

danger and death seemed to encompass him on every side; it contained no friendly port to shelter him from the storm, nor was a pilot within call, to whom he might, with safety, trust the direction of his bark; on one hand he saw the perfidious Arab, and on the other, the savage Æthiop; the former impatient for his treasures, the latter athirst for his blood.

With the multiplied dangers of this navigation, the nautical skill, the long experience, and the daring intrepidity, that marked all the maritime enterprizes of the Phœnicians, were hitherto alone equal to contend, and it was in consequence of this, that they were so long in possession of the advantageous traffic carried on, by this route, to the coasts of the Happy Arabia, and India, exclusively of all other nations of the west. To remove this obstacle to an open commerce between Europe and Asia, as well as to secure a deep, safe, and commodious port, so greatly wanted on its western shore, were objects that long occupied the thoughts of this able prince, and it was the result of the most deliberate caution, as well as the profoundest policy, that he at length resolved on opening this new road of communication, not in a part of Egypt where the passage between the Red Sea and the Nile was shortest, for, in some places, the breadth scarcely exceeds one hundred miles, which, in particular, is about the distance between the modern town of Kene, on the Nile, and the port of Cossier, the present route of the caravans, but where a safe, though circuitous, journey, by land, superseded the necessity of a perilous navigation on a stormy sea. By consulting a map of Egypt, the reader will observe, that the Nile, after leaving the cataracts, bends its course towards Lybia, in the same direction with the mountains; but, repelled by that eternal barrier, it soon after takes an easterly course, and approaches towards the Arabian Gulf. Near its banks in this quarter, on an eminence, stood the ancient city of Coptos, distant from Alexandria three hundred and three miles; and on this city, which, though not situated immediately upon the

shore of that river, communicated with it by a canal of such considerable breadth and depth, as to bear vessels of the largest burthen then in use, Ptolemy fixed, as a central inland emporium between the last named city and another which he built on the coast of the Red Sea, nearly under the tropic, and named, after his mother, Berenice. This city was erected on the side of a promontory, which there shoots out into the gulf, and in a situation far advanced towards its mouth, so that neither peril nor delay attended the passage of vessels bound thither from this port. It was connected with a spacious haven, protected by that promontory, where a numerous fleet might safely ride at anchor, and its founder spared neither labour nor treasure to make it the grand emporium of all the trade carried on, on that side of his dominion, with India, Persia, and Arabia; a trade so long enjoyed, and productive of such unbounded wealth to the adventurous race of Tyre and Carthage. Its capacious port, its noble caravanseras for the accommodation of foreigners of every nation, the spacious structures intended as magazines of the richest manufactures of the East, the immunities which the merchant enjoyed, and the powerful arm that protected his property, led to Berenice traders from the remotest parts of the southern and Asiatic continents. The Sabæan Arabians brought thither spices, frankincense, and the richest drugs; the swarthy Æthiopian, gold, ebony, and ivory; the luxurious Persian, silks, brocades, and carpets; the hardy Tartar brought down the Indus, from his native mountains, Thibetian musk, Siberian rhubarb, and the choicest ermines; and the delicate Indian, cotton, aromatics, and gems. Its crowded exchange exhibited, in one vast assemblage, all the various nations; and its glittering bazar, in one grand display, all the taste, genius, and splendour of the Oriental world.

A considerable portion of that species of commerce, which was peculiar to the tropical regions of Asia, commenced and terminated here, and the merchants, paying the moderate duties of the port,

retired, with the articles for which they had bartered their country wares, to their respective homes. Those who came for European commodities, waited the arrival of the caravans from Coptos, which city was distant from Berenice, according to Pliny, two hundred and fifty-eight miles, across the desert of Thebais. As this writer and Strabo, though flourishing at a far later period than that which engages our present consideration, have given us so particular an account of the mode, and the exact route, by which this new commerce was carried on, I have little more to do in this part than to present the reader with a correct version of what they have recorded concerning it.

Strabo, who lived when the Alexandrian commerce with India was in its highest vigour, speaking of Coptos, says, this city is inhabited partly by Egyptians and partly by Arabians. Ptolemy Philadelphus was the first Egyptian prince who, with his army, made a road between this city and Berenice, across the great desert without water, throughout the whole course of which he erected, at proper intervals, caravanseras, with every necessary accommodation, as well for travellers on foot, as on camels. The danger attending the navigation of the northern extremities of the Red Sea was the occasion of this arduous undertaking, the benefits resulting from which to commerce fully demonstrate the utility of the project. The productions of Arabia, India, and Æthiopia, were, soon after its completion, transported, by the way of the Arabian Gulph, to Coptos, and this city still remains the emporium of the merchants of the East. They no longer unlade their vessels at Berenice, where the road is grown shallow and unsafe, but at the port of Mias Hormus, which is not very remote, and where a fleet of observation is constantly kept. It was formerly the custom to travel this district on camels by night, (on account of the scorching heat, from its lying so near the line,) at which time, travellers directed their course over the desert, like mariners, by observing the stars;

they were also compelled to take with them provision and water sufficient for six or seven days journey; at present they are supplied with water from deep wells and cisterns, excavated for the purpose. There are mines of emeralds and other precious stones dispersed in the isthmus which they traverse, for which the Arabians industriously search.*

Pliny, after declaring that the Romans in his time annually sent a European fleet to India, containing commodities and bullion to the amount of fifty millions of sesterces, (somewhat more than four hundred thousand pounds of our money,) and that the profits on the articles thus exported, after all the vast expenses of so long a voyage were defrayed, returned those mercantile adventurers, in the Roman market, a profit of cent. per cent. presents us with the following minute details:

The cargo of this annual fleet, thus fitted out by the merchants of Rome, being arrived at Alexandria, was conveyed thence to Juliopolis, two miles distant; there it was embarked on the Nile, and carried up that river to Coptos, distant three hundred and three miles. If the Etesian winds blew favourably, this voyage was generally performed in twelve days. At Coptos the vessels were unloaded, and the goods transported on the backs of camels, in twelve days to Berenice, at the distance of two hundred and fifty-eight miles, where they remained in warehouses till the proper season of the year for continuing the voyage, which was about the rising of the dog-star, or Midsummer. When the goods were embarked for the last time, the vessels steered directly for the Arabian coast, and in thirty days arrived at Ocelis, the modern port of Gella, at the mouth of the Arabian Gulph. Sometimes the fleet steered to Cane, called by the moderns Cape Fartaque, and belonging to Saba, the country of incense; and sometimes to Merza, another port of Arabia Felix, but principally frequented by the merchants of the

* Strabonis Geograph. lib. xvii. p. 472; edit. Steph.

country with whom they trafficked for Arabian frankincense, drugs, and spices, and gave them, in exchange, arms, knives, and toys, of various kinds. Thence they pursue their voyage, and in forty days reach Musiris, the first mart of consequence in India. The port of Musiris, however, the modern Meerzaw, is described, by Pliny, as inaccessible to ships of any considerable burthen, and the neighbourhood of it as greatly infested by pirates. Of Barace, or Barcelore, he speaks in terms of more praise; and specifies a great inland town of the name of Madusa, to which geographers have found none in modern India immediately correspondent; though in his Cotona, or the region so abundant in the production of pepper, we immediately recognize Cotonara on that coast, a district still celebrated for the same commodity. This little digression of our author is closed with an account of the time of the return of the Roman fleet from India, which, he informs us, was either in the beginning of the month of December, answering to the month Thibi of the Egyptians, or, at the farthest, before the sixth day of the Egyptian month Mechiris, that is, before the ides of January; and then, pursuing the same route back again, they reach Alexandria in three months, and arrive in Italy about the end of a complete year from their first setting out. The several places that lay in the route from Alexandria to India, and their distances from each other, when the journey was performed by land, may be summarily and usefully exhibited in the following table:

	Miles.	Days.
From Alexandria to Juliopolis - - -	2	
From Juliopolis to Coptos - - - -	303	12
From Coptos to Berenice, over the deserts -	258	12
The voyage from Berenice to Ocelis required -		30
From Ocelis to Musiris - - - -		40
Length of the journey across Egypt - -	563 Miles.	
Time of the whole voyage to India - - - -		94 Days.

Speaking of the returns of the fleet from India to Egypt, Pliny informs us, that on its first sailing from India, it had the benefit of the north-east wind, Vulturnus; and that, when it entered the Arabian Gulf, a south or south-west wind carried it directly on to Berenice. We may reasonably infer from this account, that the mariners, principally Arabians, navigating the Erythræan and Indian oceans, must have had a knowledge of the trade-winds long before the Greek Hippalus ventured to quit the tardy and timid navigation by the coast of Arabia and Persia, and boldly launching on the wide ocean, found a new and rapid path to India by the aid of the wind, on which grateful posterity afterwards conferred his name.*

We are farther informed by Pliny, that in order to obtain every possible information concerning the internal state of India, the geographical situation of its great trading towns, its various productions, and its extensive commerce, Philadelphus, early in his reign, sent over thither Dionysius, a great mathematician and astronomer of that age, and greatly profited by the exact relations which he brought back with him of the singular customs and wise policy which prevailed in that country.†

To secure the vast commerce, thus newly acquired, from the depredations of the Arabian pirates, that, in all ages, infested the coast of the Red Sea, Philadelphus constantly kept a large fleet stationed in that part of the gulf which was nearest to Berenice; while, in the Mediterranean, a fleet of still superior magnitude was ever ready to protect from insult the port of Alexandria, and the trade of the West, now beginning to centre in that magnificent metropolis. Of the number of vessels employed on the former station, we meet in ancient writers with no regular detail; but, of those employed in the Mediterranean, we find a very exact list in Strabo, and, according to him, it consisted of two ships of thirty oars on a side, one of

* Plinii Nat. Hist. lib. vi. cap. 23, ubi supra. † Ib. lib. vi. cap. 7.

twenty, four of fourteen, two of twelve, fourteen of eleven, thirty of nine, thirty-seven of seven, five of six, seventeen of five, and, besides these, of an incredible number of vessels with four oars and three oars on a side. With these fleets he not only maintained and protected the Indian trade through Egypt, but also kept in subjection, during his whole life, most of the maritime provinces of Asia Minor.* It was not only on the Arabian Gulf and its neighbourhood, that this politic monarch erected cities and established ports: with a view, perhaps, entirely to ruin the small remaining trade of Tyre, he built, lower down the Mediterranean, on the coast of Palestine, and in the vicinity of Tyre, a new and splendid city, which he called, after his own name, Ptolemais, and adorned it with a spacious haven, that for several centuries continued a celebrated emporium, and furnished Syria, and all the adjoining regions of Asia, with the commodities of Europe. Ptolemais lay on the west side of Palestine; but, to secure every channel by which the productions of the western world might find a passage to the Higher Asia, and to India, he likewise erected, on the eastern verge of Palestine, another city, long of considerable note in those parts, which, after his surname, he denominated Philadelphia. Thus was Ptolemy in complete possession of the two great avenues of Eastern commerce, that of the caravans over land, carried on through Tadmor in the desert, by the permission of the Seleucidæ, to the Euphrates and the Persian Gulf; and that through the heart of his own dominions, by way of Coptos and Berenice. Commercial projects of this vast extent, by sea and land, demanded fleets and armies as proportionably powerful to protect and mature them; and, in consequence, we are assured, by ancient classical writers, that the whole number of ships of war, which formed the navy of Egypt, in his reign, amounted to fifteen hundred, with a thousand transport-vessels to attend them; while the army constantly maintained by that prince

* Strabonis Geograph. lib. xvii. p. 805; and also Athenæus, lib. v. p. 203.

consisted of three hundred thousand foot, twenty thousand horse, two thousand armed chariots, and three hundred elephants. Of these arduous and magnificent undertakings of the Ptolemies the reward was both splendid and ample; and Alexandria, in a comparatively short period, became the grand treasure-house of the universe.

Such was the commencement of the new and extensive commerce carried on between India and Egypt. We shall mark its gradual progress and expansion, and in a future page specify the commodities that formed the more immediate objects of barter between the two nations: it is sufficient, for the present, that we have noticed the enterprizing spirit of the two first Ptolemies, and the dawnings of an immediate intercourse, through Egypt, with the states of Europe, the greatest part of which vast continent was at this period plunged in the profoundest barbarism. Let us return to contemplate the farther proceedings of the Seleucidæ with the Indian nation; and the first establishment of the Parthian and Bactrian dynasties on its frontiers.

CHAPTER III.

Sandracottus and Seleucus continue united in strict Friendship.—The Greek Dynasty of Pattala extends its Power.—Account of Tagara and Pluthana, ancient Cities of the Deccan.—The vast Commerce carried on by the Greeks with Northern Asia and Europe.—Strange Mistakes of the Ancients concerning the Caspian Sea.—The different Routes of the Caravans through Northern Asia, and the Objects of Barter described.—The History of the Seleucidæ resumed.—Seleucus assassinated.—Sandracottus dies—succeeded by his Son Allitrochades.—Native Accounts of that Monarch and his immediate Successors on the Throne of India, compared with the scanty Fragments, relative to them, to be found in Greek classical Authors of that Period.

SENSIBLE of the sterling value of the friendship of Sandracottus, Seleucus appears, during the remainder of their respective lives, diligently to have cultivated, both by his ambassadors, and the mutual interchange of good offices, that pacific disposition which mutual prudence had dictated, and in some degree rendered necessary, to those sovereigns. The conjecture is extremely probable, though, I own, not absolutely justified, by any thing contained in the few historians of the period, that he continued at intervals to receive fresh supplies for his army of those elephants in which he took so much delight; and that, in fact, a *tribute* under the softened name of a present, for the undisturbed possession of the Indian throne, was annually transmitted to the founder of the Syro-Macedonian dynasty. Nor was it only by presents of a military nature that Sandracottus cultivated the friendship of Seleucus; for Phylarchus, in

Athenæus, reports, that he contributed towards the improvement of the voluptuous pleasures of his seraglio, by sending him also certain drugs and roots of a nature tending *ad incendendam libidinem*, for thus Bayer, I conceive, justly translates the words δυναμεις ϛυτικας; possibly *genseng*, or the more celebrated *eringo* root.*

In the mean time the dynasty of Greek princes, whom I have presumed to have been settled at, or near, Pattala, seem to have possessed great power in that region, and from the increasing commerce carried on by their subjects with Egypt, Arabia, and Persia, on the one hand, and with the whole region of the Peninsula, beyond the Ballagaut mountains, and even to the Ganges itself, on the other, were daily deriving an immense revenue. The commerce indeed carried on from Barygaza, or Baroach, with the interior of the Peninsula, seems eventually to have opened the way to a partial conquest of its provinces, since, as we learn from the authorities cited in the history of the Greek kings of Bactria, by the learned Bayer, that, at a period not very distant, a prince named Menander, possibly one of this dynasty of Greek sovereigns, was able to force his way through the heart of India, quite to the northern range, to pass that part of the Caucasus which separates India from Bactria, to penetrate to the very capital of the Bactrian princes, and form a junction of the southern Greek empire with that of Bactria. After this conquest of Menander, the two kingdoms, though at such a vast distance, became in a great degree united. To these, according to Strabo,† shortly after was added *Sigertidis regnum*, the kingdom of *Siger*, situated considerably lower than the mouths of the Indus, according to Rennell, on the northern part of the Malabar coast, and afterwards a considerable emporium for Arabian and Egyptian merchandize.‡

* Bayer Hist. Regni Grec. Bact. p. 38; and Athenæus, p. 18.

† Strabo, lib. ii. p. 496, edit. 1649.

‡ Bayer Hist. Regni Grec. Bact. p. 76.

The author of the Periplus is one of those writers who asserts that Alexander had penetrated to the Ganges, and after mentioning the drachmæ found at Barygaza, bearing the effigies of Menander, takes notice of the city of Ozene, in the eastern quarter of India, as having, long before his time, been a royal residence, and visited by the Greeks. Ozene is also mentioned by Ptolemy, and, as Rennell observes, both in name and position appears to be Ougein, the capital of Malva. When Ougein, therefore, is said, in Ferishta, as will be noticed hereafter, to have been built by Bickermajit, near the commencement of our æra, the author must have meant that he rebuilt and beautified that city, after, perhaps, expelling the remains of a Greek colony.* Seleucus too is also asserted, by Pliny, at a later period, to have reached the Ganges, and even the mouth of that river; but both these accounts are extremely improbable, and, if true, could only be true of some of the more daring of the Bactrian princes or generals, who might have penetrated the interior from their western domain, near the mouths of the Indus.†

At the time referred to by the former of these authors, Tagara and Pluthana were the cities most celebrated for commerce in the southern districts of India; and the following is the substance of Mr. Wilford's interesting strictures in regard to that commerce, and those cities. Tagara, he says, is synonymous with Deoghir, a place of high antiquity, famous throughout all India, on account of the neighbouring pagodas of Elora, and now called *Dowlet-abad.* The term Pluthana is retained in the modern appellation of Pultanah, situated on the southern bank of the Godavery, about 217 miles south of Baroach (Barygaza). Tagara was the capital of a province known to the Greeks by the name of Ariaca, now Aurengabad.

According to Arrian, it was a very large city; and the produce of the country at that early period, consisted chiefly of coarse dungarees *(othonium vulgare)*, of which vast quantities were exported;

* Periplus Maris Erythræi, p. 27. † Pliny, lib. vi. cap. 17.

muslins of all sorts *(sindones omnis generis)*, and a kind of cotton stuff dyed of a whitish purple, and very much of the colour of the flowers of mallows, whence called Molochyna.

All kinds of mercantile goods, throughout the Deccan, were brought to Tagara, and from thence conveyed to Barygaza.

It was about ten days journey to the eastward of Pluthana; and Pluthana was twenty days journey to the southward of Baroach. The road to it lay through the Ballagaut mountains, over which their commodities were transported in carts, that travelled about the rate of five coss, or eleven British miles per day, the usual rate of travelling with heavy loaded carts; and the twenty days during which they are said to have been going that distance, according to that rate, gives the number of miles mentioned above. Onyx and other precious stones abounded in its neighbourhood, being washed by torrents from the hills. Tagara being stated by Arrian, as about ten days journey distant from Pluthana, we may conclude the journey to have been somewhat more than 100 miles. Half way between these two celebrated marts was placed Paithana, now Pattan, mentioned by Greek writers as the imperial residence of Rajah Salbahan, and thought, by Mr. Wilford, to be the same with the Siripolemæus of Ptolemy. Tagara, or Deoghir, continued the metropolis of that part of India till towards the latter end of the eleventh century.

It may appear astonishing, observes Mr. Wilford, that though the Rajah of Tagara was possessed of a large tract on the sea coast, yet that all the trade should be carried on by land; but formerly it was not so: on the arrival of the Greeks into the Deccan, goods were brought to Callian near Bombay, and then shipped off. However a Rajah of Larikeh, or Lar, called Sandanes, according to Arrian, would no longer allow the Greeks to trade either at Callian or at the harbours belonging to him on that coast, except Baroach; and, whenever any of them were found at Callian or in the neighbourhood, they were confined and sent to Baroach under a strong

guard. Arrian, being a Greek himself, has not thought proper to inform us, what could induce the Rajah to behave in this manner to the Greeks; but his silence is a convincing proof that they had behaved amiss; and it is likely enough they had attempted to make a settlement in the island of Salset, in order to render themselves independent, and facilitate their conquests in the Deccan.

The fears of the Rajah were not groundless; for the Greek kings of Bactriana were possessed of the Panjab, Cabul, &c. in the north of India.

There were other harbours to the south of Callian, belonging to the Rajah of Tagara, but they were not frequented, on account of pirates.*

Such were the good effects of the spirited and politic exertions of Ptolemy Philadelphus, to establish a permanent commerce between Egypt and the Peninsula of India; a commerce to which, from situation, the king of Syria seemed to possess a better title, had he chosen to make as vigorous efforts to secure it.

But although Seleucus, with such apparent imprudence, abandoned to Ptolemy and the Greeks of Egypt the whole commerce of the southern districts of India, he was by no means indifferent to that of the Northern Asia, then carried on by the Oxus and the Hyrcanian or Caspian Sea, along whose confines many powerful and warlike nations were then established, many opulent cities flourished, and into whose bosom many great and navigable rivers discharged their waters. A strange misconception, in regard to this sea, seems to have very generally prevailed among the ancients. Some imagined that it formed an immediate part of the great Northern ocean, of which it was a large bay, like the Persian and Arabian Gulfs; others, that it had a connection with that ocean by means of the Euxine; and others again, that it had a communication with the ocean that washes India on the east. Alexander

* Asiatic Researches, Vol. I. p. 374.

himself, as we are informed by Arrian,* ever attentive to geographical concerns, was anxious fully to investigate this disputed matter, and, a short period before his death, had given orders to fell a great quantity of timber in the forests of Hyrcania, for the purpose of preparing a fleet, in which he intended personally to explore that mighty bed of congregated waters, without, to this day, any apparent efflux. He had already sailed into the Persian Gulf through the mouth of the Euphrates, and into the Eastern Ocean through that of the Indus; and he had probably formed a similar project of launching out into the Northern Ocean through the Streights, by which it was supposed to be connected with the Caspian. The execution of his design was alone prevented by his premature death; but Seleucus, to whose lot, after the destruction of Antigonus, fell the entire and uncontrolled sovereignty of the higher Asia, assiduously endeavoured to perfect the plan thus judiciously formed, and vigorously commenced. The fleet for exploring its winding shores and vast extent (above six hundred miles in length and three hundred in breadth), was expeditiously completed, and a partial survey took place during his reign; that portion of it explored by the fleets of this sovereign bearing, for many ages, the name of the Seleucidian Sea; while the remaining portion afterwards explored, with the same motives, by Antiochus the Great, was denominated the Sea of Antiochus.† The views of both these princes were to open an immediate passage for the costly articles of Indian and Persian commerce, through that sea and the Northern Ocean, of which they still considered it to be a vast bay, or by its conjectured connection with the Euxine, into Europe. Seleucus, indeed, towards the close of his reign, a reign cut short by the dagger of an assassin, seems to have been convinced of the error of both opinions; and, we are informed by Pliny,‡ had absolutely resolved on the arduous undertaking of cutting a canal from the Caspian to the Euxine Sea, for the purpose

* Arrian, lib. vii. cap. 16. † Pliny, lib. ii. cap. 64. ‡ Ib. lib. vi. cap. 11.

of more widely expanding the commerce of the North, and transporting the commodities of the provinces stretching along the most eastern confines of the one sea, to those lying on the most western shores of the other.

It may seem strange that Seleucus, so desirous of naval distinction, and an extensive commerce, should have thus wholly relinquished to the Ptolemies the lucrative trade carried on between Egypt and the cities which, lying near the mouth of the Indus, bordered so closely upon the Persian territories, and to which, by Alexander's removal of the cataracts at the efflux of the Euphrates into the Persian Gulf, a passage was so short and easy. But it has before been observed, that the ancient race of Persians were equally restrained by the precepts of religion and policy, from engaging in maritime expeditions; that the element of water, not less than that of fire, was the object of their superstitious veneration, and while that superstition made them shudder at the idea of polluting it themselves, by any species of filth, thrown from vessels, the dread of invasion from a quarter in which they were so defenceless, induced them to prohibit the entrance of foreigners into their dominions, by any maritime inlet, under penalties extremely rigorous; and that, in fact, to render invasion impossible by the channel of their two great rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates, they effectually dammed up the mouths of those rivers with immense engines; to remove which cost Alexander, when his fleet, under the command of Nearchus, sailed, by the route of the Persian Gulf, into Mesopotamia, no small portion of time and labour.

When sentiments so avowedly hostile to a great project, sentiments at once sanctioned by the precepts of religion, and the laws of policy, have taken such deep root in the minds of a bigotted people, it is no easy matter to erase them. Though Alexander had removed the cataracts from the Euphrates, neither he nor his successor could divert from its ancient course the current of popular

prejudice, and the Persians, with every temptation to engage in them, still remained a race averse from maritime adventure. They were content with the ancient mode of obtaining the rich productions of India by a tedious land carriage in ponderous wains, and on the backs of camels, through the southern provinces of that empire. Indeed it is more than probable that, constantly apprehensive of invasion from that dreaded quarter, shortly after Alexander's death the Persians replaced the cataracts that dammed up the mouths of their two great rivers; at all events, according to Ammianus Marcellinus, those cataracts were remaining there in the reign of the emperor Julian, when that prince, attended by the historian himself, made his irruption into Persia, about the middle of the fourth century.* The Persians had, in fact, constructed a port near the entrance of the Euphrates, for the purpose of receiving foreign commodities, from the Indian, Arabian, and Alexandrian merchants who traded thither; and between the Euphrates and the fort of *Spasinus* in the Persian Gulf, the author of the Periplus of the Erythræan Sea has placed an emporium, which he entitles *Apologus*, and mentions another of still greater celebrity and resort in the same quarter, of the name of *Omana*, which is confirmed by Pliny, who supposes it of such high antiquity as to have been one of the cities built by Semiramis in Carmania.† This I cannot but consider as very strong testimony of the assertion of some learned geographers, that there anciently existed two cities of the latter name, for by this description he certainly cannot allude to the ancient capital of Arabia Felix, situated in the heart of that country, and which formerly gave its name to the whole of it. To these great trading cities, expressly said to have been situated on the Persian shore, the former of these authors adds, the eastern merchants brought from Barygaza (Baroach), in ships of considerable magnitude, various costly articles both of

* Ammianus Marcellinus, lib. xxiv. p. 281.

† Periplus Maris Erythræi, p. 86; and Pliny, lib. vi. cap. 28.

Indian and Arabian growth and manufacture, lapis calaminaris, various kinds of precious woods, and incense, the produce of Cana in Arabia; consequently it could not be to the Arabian Oman that they brought them. The Omanians, who are described as making use, in their coasting navigations, of little boats of pliant wood, tied and sewed together with thongs made of the sinews of beasts, are expressly said, in the Periplus, to have carried back to Barygaza, *and to Arabia*, pearls, purple, rich Babylonian vests, wine, dates, and slaves. The more northern provinces of Persia were abundantly supplied with all the luxuries of India and China, by the unwearied labours of that powerful and patient animal, the camel, and the great navigable rivers, the Oxus, the Cyrus, the Jaxartes, and others by which they were every where intersected, but of these we shall have repeated occasion to speak more at large hereafter.

In discussing this apparent reluctance of the Syrian sovereigns to take the utmost advantage of their near neighbourhood, in the southern districts of their empire, to the great established marts of Indian commerce, it should not be forgotten, that, independent of their vast power by land, the Ptolemies rapidly succeeded in their efforts to procure a most powerful fleet, with which it was impossible for Seleucus to contend; for, in confirmation of what has been previously stated relative to their naval strength, Athenæus tells us, that besides six score ships, with oars, of uncommon magnitude, above four thousand other ships of different kinds, were employed in the service of the Egyptian government.* This prodigious maritime force was indeed necessary to Philadelphus in the zenith of his glory, when he possessed not only the whole sea coast of Syria, but, as we learn from Theocritus, who wrote his seventeenth Idyllium in honour of this prince, had extended his dominion beyond that sea to Cilicia, Pamphylia, Lycia, Caria, and the Cyclades, and reigned supreme over almost four thousand cities.† The successors

* Athenæus lib. v. p. 203. † Theocrit. Idyll. xvii. line 90.

of the two first Ptolemies, fully aware of the immense wealth which their monopoly of the southern trade of India produced them, constantly kept up a great proportion of this vast armament during all the periods of their reign in Egypt. It was equally, therefore, a matter of policy and of necessity, that the Syrian monarchs turned their attention towards the improving commerce of the northern provinces, and the Caspian Sea, whither the productions of the southern regions of India, destined for those provinces and Europe, were brought as to a central mart; being conveyed from the banks of the Indus to the Oxus on the backs of camels, down the stream of that river to the shores of the Caspian, and thence by the Cyrus, the modern Kur, into the Black Sea, whence they were diffused through Armenia, as well as those parts of Europe, which began to indulge a rising predilection for the rich produce and elegant manufactures of India. In ages long posterior, according to Bishop Huetius,* an attempt was made by the Genoese, to recover this route for eastern commodities, and a proposition submitted, in the time of Pope Leo the Tenth, to the Czar Basil, that Indian wares might be brought to Astracan, an emporium of Russia bordering on the Caspian, to be carried thence down the great river Volga, the ancient Rha, to Moscow; from Moscow down the river of the same name and the Duna, or Dwina, to Riga in Livonia, and from Riga into the heart of Europe by the Baltic and German Oceans. The proposition, however, was rejected by that politic prince, who thought it opened too easy an ingress to foreign nations into the centre of his remote dominions, and might be the means of ultimately depriving his subjects of a most lucrative commerce which, in propriety, belonged exclusively to them. Pliny has given us the following particular detail of this northern route, and the distances of the stages, as carried on at the period, about 200 years after the reign of Seleucus, of Pompey's march against Mithridates, the reigning king of Pontus.

* History of the Commerce of the Ancients, p. 33.

He says that it was only a journey of seven days from the frontiers of India, through the country of the Bactrians, to the river Icarus, which falls into the Oxus, down which stream the commodities of India were transported into the Caspian Sea. Thence, they were carried up the river Cyrus, to a place within five days journey over land to Phasis, the capital of Colchis, situated in the eastern extremity of the Pontus Euxinus, and renowned in Grecian fable for its golden fleece, which, in all probability, was nothing more than the golden produce of India, which the Argonauts secured by opening the commerce of the Black Sea.* At this day, the Oxus no longer flows into the Caspian, the miserable policy of the modern Tartars having induced them to divert its course, as well as that of the Jaxartes; and these two noble rivers are now lost and swallowed up in the sands of that boundless desert.

Of the thirty-six great generals who survived Alexander, and divided his empire among them, from their insatiable ambition, their continued and bloody contests, and we may surely add, without superstition, from the just judgment of Providence that followed them, for their heinous offences against God and man, in the forty-third year after his decease only two remained alive; Seleucus and Lysimachus. These mighty warriors were at that moment preparing for a dreadful battle, which was to constitute one or the other the uncontrolled sovereign of Asia. Seleucus ultimately proved the conqueror, the surviving conqueror of all the heroes trained in the school of Alexander, and this circumstance, added to many previous victories, has induced historians to distinguish him from other sovereigns of this dynasty by the name of NICATOR. He did not long enjoy the glory that redounded to him from this last important victory, being barbarously and ungratefully assassinated by a cowardly stab in the back by Ptolemy Ceraunus, on whom he had heaped innumerable kindnesses, as he was triumphantly entering

* Plinii Nat. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 17.

into Macedon, about seven months after he had gained that kingdom from Lysimachus, with intent to make its capital his future residence.* He perished, according to Justin's statement, in the seventy-third year of his age, in the thirty-second of the æra that bears his name, and in the year before Christ 280.

So little of the domestic history of India respecting this period is as yet known, and so little have even the most important transactions in that country been arranged in any regular chronological manner, that I am unable to fix the exact period of the death of Sandracottus. It is certain, however, that he died some time previous to Seleucus, since Daimachus is recorded to have been sent ambassador from the former to the court of Allitrochades, his son, and to have also composed, from information and observations made there, some interesting memorials, in part cited by Athenæus, concerning India;† but they have long ago perished. Although Daimachus's account of India be severely condemned by Strabo, who styles the whole a romance, yet let it be remembered, that great geographer unites with his name those of Megasthenes, Onesicritus, and Nearchus, whose relations have in various instances, proved the most authentic sources of intelligence regarding interior India among the ancients, and have been confirmed by the most recent modern details. With respect to their supposed fabulous accounts of men with such long ears that they could cover themselves with them, of others with a single eye, without mouths, or noses, with long feet, the toes of which were turned backwards, and of others whose heads were formed in the shape of a wedge, and of a small race of people only three spans in height, &c. &c. these grotesque symbolical representations they doubtless had contemplated with astonishment, engraved and sculptured on the walls of the Indian pagodas; but these in fact were nothing more than the mythological designs of Avatars and other Devatas, in whose forms were combined, as in Egypt still

* Justin. lib. xxvii. cap. 2. † Athenæus, lib. ix. cap. 11.

more anciently, the human and bestial character and features, colossal Cynocephali, or Veeshnu with the *boar's head*, so nearly resembling the Canis Anubis of Egypt, the large mountain satyrs of the Peninsula, that attended the army of Ram to Ceylon, and of the dwarf figures representing Veeshnu in the Bali Avatar, so frequently occurring in the Elephanta, and other sacred caverns. These were mistaken, in that remote region of the world, at whose extremities every thing monstrous, every thing prodigious, "and worse than fables yet have feigned, or fear conceived," was supposed to be engendered, for actual existing similitudes of real life. I can conceive no other possible source of such egregious deviations, in description, from the line of historical truth, and this their mistake of imaginary for real beings, appears, to my mind, a sufficient vindication of these writers from the charge of gross and direct misrepresentation.

Allitrochades is by the Greeks sometimes called Amitrochades, and, on this word, Mr. Wilford, our best guide through this dark æra, observes: "The son of Chandra-Gupta is called Allitrochades and Amitrocades by the Greek historians. Seleucus sent an ambassador to him; and after his death, the same good intelligence was maintained by Antiochus, the son or the grandson of Seleucus. This son of Chandra-Gupta is called Varisára in the Puránas; according to Parasara, his name was Dasaratha; but neither the one nor the other bear any affinity to Amitrocades: this name appears, however, to be derived from the Sanscreet Mitra-Gupta, which signifies saved by Mitra, or the Sun, and therefore, probably, was only a surname."*

In reverting to Ferishta's Indian history of this period, we find still less consonance in the names of the princes said to have reigned in the period immediately succeeding Alexander's irruption. The detail of their actions, however, though brief, in general corresponds. I shall first present the reader with what that author has slightly

* Asiatic Researches, Vol. V. p. 194.

recorded of Sandracottus and his son and grandson, and then proceed to the relation of the Greek accounts of the remaining transactions carried on between the Syrian and Indian sovereigns, till the final establishment of the Parthian and Bactrian empires.

Sinsarchund, says Ferishtah, the same whom the Greeks call Sandracottus, assumed the imperial dignity after the death of Phoor, and in a short time regulated the discomposed concerns of the empire. He neglected not, in the mean time, to remit the *customary tribute to the Grecian captains*, who possessed Persia under, and after the death of, Alexander. Sinsarchund, and his son after him, possessed the empire of India seventy years. When the grandson of Sinsarchund acceded to the throne, a prince named Jona, who is said to have been a grandnephew of Phoor, though that circumstance is not well attested, aspiring to the throne, rose in arms against the reigning prince, and deposed him.

Jona was an excellent prince, endued with many great and good qualities. He took great pains in peopling and in cultivating the waste parts of Hindostan, and his indefatigable attention to the police of the country procured him a lasting reputation for justice and benevolence. Jona acceded to the throne of India little more than two hundred and sixty years before the commencement of the Christian æra; and, not many years after, Ardeshir, whom the Greeks call Arsaces, possessing himself of the eastern provinces of Persia, expelled the successors of Alexander, and founded the Parthian, or second Persian empire. Arsaces assumed the name of king about two hundred and fifty-six years before Christ, according to the writers of Greece, which perfectly agrees with the accounts of the Brahmins. Ardeshir, or Arsaces, claimed and established the right of Persia, to a tribute from the empire of India; and Jona, fearing his arms, made him a present of elephants and a vast quantity of gold and jewels. Jona reigned long after this transaction, in

great tranquillity, at Canouge; and he and his posterity possessed the throne peaceably, during the space of ninety years.*

Chandra, or Chundra, as it is sometimes written, signifies the moon; we have, therefore, in this Persian writer, and in the final termination of Sinsarchund, at least, a relic of the Sanscreet appellative. This account seems to prove what we before intimated, that the elephants delivered to Seleucus were considered rather as a tribute than as a present. Again, the seventy years allotted very reasonably to the reigns of Sandracottus and his sons will carry us down through the reigns of Antiochus Soter and Theos, successors to Seleucus in Syria, to near the termination of that of the latter, and the epoch of the revolt of the Parthian and Bactrian empires, which took place about the year before Christ 255. During the reigns of the two princes, Seleucus Callinicus and Ceraunus, India is scarcely mentioned by the Greek historians, except in the history of the Greek kings of Bactria, into the details of which we shall presently enter. It is evident from the passage above cited, from Ferishtah, in which Jona, though represented as a powerful prince, and raised solely by the vigour of his arms to imperial distinction, is stated to have been compelled to acknowledge the Persian monarch as his superior, that the Arsacides also continued to receive a tribute from India, on the ground of the ancient right to it of the Persian monarchs of the Caianan dynasty. The publication, in 1631, by Leo Ateatius, at Rome, of the inscription on the *Monumentum Adulitanum*, or marble of Aduli, has rendered the literary world more extensively acquainted with the conquests made in Syria and the higher Asia, by Ptolemy Evergetes, in the reign of Antiochus Theos, than historians previously were from any other attainable source of information. According to that inscription, he conquered all the countries between Mount Taurus and Bactria, and seems even to have entered the frontier provinces of the Indian empire. If such were the fact,

* Ferishtah, Vol. I. p. 11.

however, there are no particulars on record, by either native or foreign writers, on the subject.

In the reign of Antiochus the Great, the affairs of India again become conspicuously prominent in the page of Asiatic history, and the renewed compact of that monarch with Sophagasenus, in the year before Christ 204, confirmed by the tribute of elephants, is an additional testimony of the dependence of India, at least of its western regions, on the more powerful sovereign of Persia. Jona and his posterity are said to have retained peaceable possession of the Indian throne during a period of ninety years, which, added to the seventy years, during which Sandracottus and his descendants reigned over it, will bring us down to the year, or about the year, (for to no certainty can we attain at this obscure period of the Indian chronology) 100 before Christ; at which time the Bactrian kingdom of India had already passed the meridian of its glory. That glory as rapidly declined as it had risen, and about thirty years afterwards set in eternal night; the empire being ravaged on one side by the Parthians, and on the other inundated by the torrent of barbarians, that kept rolling on from the borders of the Caspian, and the shores of the Jaxartes.

It was during the ninety years in which this latter dynasty sat on the throne of India, that Antiochus the Great, after granting peace and an independent crown to Euthydemus, the Bactrian, made his irruption into that region, and Sophagasenus must have been one of the descendants of this race, but there are no Indian records, as yet discovered, that throw any light upon this darkest æra of its annals, and little more can be collected from the Greek historians of that period, particularly Polybius, who simply records the fact of Antiochus having crossed Paropamisus with his army, of his renewing his alliance with the Indian sovereign, and of his obtaining from him a tribute of elephants, which, added to those he had already procured in Bactria, made the whole number amount

to one hundred and fifty. He is also said, by the same author, to have received a considerable quantity of grain for the consumption of the army, and to have left behind him Androsthenes, of Cyzicus, to collect the tribute promised in money.*

After Jona's posterity had become extinct, Callian Chund, a warlike and sanguinary prince, is said to have reigned over Hindostan, that is, the eastern districts, of which Canouge was then the capital, and to have been driven, on account of his tyranny, from the throne, by a general insurrection of the rajahs dependent upon his authority. With him the regular empire of India on the Ganges seems, for a time at least, to have been at an end; since after this event many years of discord and anarchy ensued, and each more powerful rajah became alternately a competitor for the supreme authority.

The next emperor of India mentioned in Ferishtah, and noticed by Sir William Jones, as of any superior talents and distinction, is the celebrated Bickermajit, or Vicramaditya, who, by a series of bold exertions and great exploits, as well in the political as military field, arrived at the supreme sovereignty of Hindostan, according to the last author's corrected chronology,† in the 56th year before Christ. Of him a most magnificent account is given in all the accessible Indian histories. He is recorded to have been unequalled by any former king of that country in the science of jurisprudence, governing, in fortitude, in justice, and wisdom; and to have travelled, in the habit of a mendicant, over a great part of the East, in order to acquire the arts, learning, and policy of foreign nations, and transplant them into his own. He was even thought to have taken up arms by the divine command, as Rama of old, to purge the empire of vice and tyranny, and he exalted aloft, in the centre of the land, the standard of equity, and the banners of religion. He rapidly subdued the kingdoms of Malva and Guzzerat, and rendered all the other great feudatories dependent upon his sovereign will. Both

* Vide Polyb. lib. xi. p. 592, edit. Casaubon. † See Vol. II. of this Work, p. 92.

poets and historians are uniform in their praise of this great and just man; the former, wishing to impress us with an adequate idea of his inflexible justice, in the Oriental style, affirm that the MAGNET, without his permission, dared not exert its power upon iron, nor AMBER upon the chaff of the field; and the latter add, that such was his temperance and contempt of grandeur, he slept upon a mat, and reduced the furniture of his apartment to an earthen pot, filled with water from the spring.

He was also a munificent patron of learning, and the poet and philosopher Calidas, who flourished in his reign, was particularly protected by him. The latter was considered as the chief of fourteen learned Brahmins, whom Bickermajit invited to his court from different parts of Hindostan, and who were denominated the fourteen jewels of his crown. While he was thus engaged in patronizing literature, he was by no means inattentive to the promotion of the more sacred concerns of religion; and to animate, in this respect, the zeal of the inferior classes, always most powerfully operated upon by external objects, he set up the great image of Maha-cali, or Time, in the city of Ugein, which he built, while he himself worshipped only the infinite and invisible God.

The Hindoos retain such a respect for the memory of Bickermajit, that most of them, to this day, calculate their civil time from the period of his inauguration. The famous Sapor, king of Persia, is placed, in the Indian chronology, as cotemporary with this renowned king of Malva. He was slain in his old age, about the commencement of the Christian æra, in a battle against a confederacy of the princes of the Deccan.* The Hindoos have also another famous epoch, commencing from the death of a prince, third in succession from him, as some report, but his immediate successor, according to others, named Salbahan. Concerning his history, however, we have as yet obtained no particulars, except that by the

* Ferishtah, Vol. I. p. 13.

latter he is recorded to have headed the insurgents of the Deccan who deprived Bickermajit of his throne and life, and that he for a time transferred the seat of the empire in the Deccan from Tagara, Deogŭr, to Paithana, or Pattan, his proper rajahship; though Tagara afterwards recovered its dignity as the imperial city of the Southern India.* Undoubtedly more full and interesting details concerning these great characters on the field of Indian transactions, as well as of many other mighty potentates and legislators, enumerated in the long catalogue of Maghada princes, from Chandra-Gupta down to Chandrabijia, if they all actually existed in the character of sovereign princes, a matter which I hold extremely dubious, will gradually come to light, and be transmitted to Europe, as the members of the Asiatic Society continue to extend their researches. In the interim let us attend to those of the Bactrian and Parthian sovereigns, as detailed by Greek and Persian writers, on the western frontiers of that mighty empire.

* Ferishtah, Vol. I. p. 13; and Mr. Wilford, Asiatic Researches, Vol. I. p. 373; London, quarto edit.

CHAPTER IV.

The History of the Origin, Progress, and final Establishment of the Kingdom founded in BACTRIANA *and Western Hindostan, by the Greek Successors of Alexander.—Geographical Survey of Bactriana.—its delightful Climate and luxurious Productions.—Conquered by Alexander.—The Macedonian Garrison revolts.—Bactriana rent from the Syrian Empire, and erected into a separate Monarchy by* THEODOTUS.—PARTHIA *about the same Period becomes independent under* ARSACES.—*The revolted Kingdoms strengthen themselves by a close Confederacy against the Power of the Syrian Monarchs.—Theodotus the Second driven from his Throne by Euthydemus, who usurps the Bactrian Sceptre.—The History of the Syrian Dynasty, as connected with the Bactrian and Indian Empires resumed.—Antiochus the Great makes War on the Parthian and Bactrian Monarchs, and marches an Army into India—he receives a Tribute of Elephants from Sophagasenus, its Sovereign, and returns to Babylon.—Euthydemus succeeded on the Bactrian Throne by Menander.*

BACTRIANA, the modern CHORASAN, of whose sovereigns of Greek extraction I am now to give, from very scanty materials, the concise history, was bounded on the north by the great river Oxus, the modern Gihon, which separates it from Sogdiana. On its southern border rise, as a mighty barrier, the lofty summits of Paropamisus, a part of the great Tauric range, which separates Bactriana from India, and to which the soldiers of Alexander, to flatter the vanity of that prince, vauntingly assigned the name of Caucasus. It is the Hindoo-Ko of modern maps. Margiana formed its western

boundary; and along its eastern confines stretched the vast regions of Asiatic Scythia, and the Massagetæ;* Bactria its capital, by its Oriental name of Balkh, has been already repeatedly noticed in this work and the Indian Antiquities, as the principal residence of Zerdusht, where his proudest pyræum was erected, and the most splendid rites of fire-worship were celebrated; and whence that renowned theologue, in company with his patron, Darius Hystaspes, visited the Brachmans in their woody recesses amidst the mountains of Superior India.† Its glory had greatly decayed, and the sacred fires in its temples burned with but a faint glimmer, from the general decay of the Sabian superstition in Chorasan, or the *province of the Sun*, when visited by Alexander, who, it has been already observed, left within its walls a considerable force, and to overawe his Bactrian and Sogdian subjects, built in its neighbourhood the Paropamisan Alexandria, doubtless the modern Candahar, and furnished it with a still stronger garrison.

Besides its noble capital, Bactriana, and the territory dependent upon it, had many rich and beautiful cities, though the names of few except Drapsica, and Eucratidia, built by Eucratides, one of its later sovereigns, have descended to posterity. Justin, indeed, informs us, that Theodotus, its first independent sovereign, of Greek origin, had no less than a thousand cities under his command.‡ Its delightful climate, for Balkh, according to Ulug Beg's Astronomical Tables, is situated in latitude 36° 41′, its various and abundant

* Cellarii Geograph. Antiq. Vol. II. p. 507.

† Consult Vol. II. p. 533, of this history and preceding chapters, with respect to what has occurred concerning Balkh and the ancient monarchies of IRAN and TURAN, and the contest of their kings, with the history of which this chapter is connected. Indeed as we pursue the stream of events, we shall find even to the latest period of Mahommedan glory, that these contests are the basis of all modern Eastern history: it is still Iran and Turan, under the various names of Persians, Scythians, and Moguls, contending for the sovereignty of this part of Asia.

‡ Justin lib. xli. cap. 4.

productions, its luxurious pastures filled with innumerable herds of the finest and largest species of cattle, and fertilized throughout its whole extent by the majestic river Oxus, down whose stream were wafted into the Caspian the richest articles of Oriental commerce, rendered it the most envied region of Asia. No wonder therefore, can be excited by the perpetual struggles of its governors to become independent of its rightful sovereigns, the kings of Syria, which they finally effected so far as to become their rivals in the extent of empire and in military glory.

Strabo indeed, expressly says, that so great was the power of the Greeks who possessed Bactriana, and on account of the excellency of its climate and productions, such numbers crowded thither, that its sovereigns were enabled to subject to their yoke both Aria and India; and in the latter country particularly, according to Apollodorus of Adramyttium, more and greater nations than even Alexander himself: but chiefly Menander, who passing the Hypanis, the boundary of Alexander's incursion, pressed on to the farthest limits of the East. Part of this vast empire was possessed by himself, and part by Demetrius, the son of Euthydemus, king of the Bactrians; and he adds, that they not only possessed the Pattalene, but also a great part of the adjoining maritime tract, which is called Tessariosti and the kingdom of Sigertis, or part of Malabar. But neither did the remotest frontier of Aria and Bactriana bound their vast dominion, which extended even to the Seres and Phryni,* or Sacæ, their powerful neighbours to the east and north of Bactriana. They had for their principal cities Bactra, Darapsa, Eucratidia, founded as before observed, by Eucratides, and many others.† But from this

* In the original the words are Συρων και Φαυνων, the Syrians, and adopting the emendation of Casaubon, who, for the latter term, would substitute Φοινικων, the Phœnicians, which is nearly tautology. Bayer greatly commends, and adopts another emendation by Valens, who would substitute Σηρων και Φρυνων, which is much more consonant to sense and history, and is therefore inserted in the text.

† Strabo, lib. ii. p. 496; edit. Basil.

general survey of the power and splendour of the Bactrian princes, and the riches and population of the country, let us proceed to particular details, and mark the progress by which those princes gradually ascended to that formidable point of greatness and strength which enabled them to defy all the power of the Seleucidæ, the lords paramount of Asia, vigorously called forth and directed against their empire by Antiochus the Great, next to Seleucus the most warlike sovereign of that renowned dynasty.

Alexander had scarcely entered India when, as we are informed by Curtius,* an insurrection of the garrison left in Bactriana took place, under a chief named Athenodorus, who had usurped the title of king, not so much, adds this author, from ambitious views, as under this assumed authority, to collect together and command a strong body of Greeks anxious and determined to revisit their native country. The beginning of this defection was occasioned by a quarrel among themselves, in which several of their comrades were slain, and the dread of punishment from Alexander on his return, urged the stronger party to the desperate measure of seizing upon the ill-guarded citadel of Bactra, and uniting themselves in a close confederacy with the barbarians. Circumstances, in some degree similar to these, I make not the least doubt, occurred in most of the distant garrisons left by Alexander in Asia, and gave rise, as I conceive was the case at Pattala, to an infinite number of small kingdoms or satrapies, dispersed over his immense empire. But to proceed to other particulars of the Bactrian revolt. Athenodorus was not permitted to retain long or undisturbed possession of his regal elevation; for one Bicon, an equally adventurous Greek officer, who seems to have been second in command, inflamed with envy at his sudden exaltation, secretly conspired against him, and caused him to be murdered, at an entertainment to which he had invited him, by the hands of Boxus, a native of Maceria. On the ensuing

* Quintus Curtius, lib. ix. cap. 7.

day, a general assembly being convened to investigate this dark affair, Bicon had the address to persuade the majority of them that he only acted thus in self-defence, for that Athenodorus had concerted a plan for his certain destruction, which he could alone render abortive by striking the first blow. Though the greater part of the assembly were pacified by this representation, applauded the conduct of Bicon, and even placed him on the vacant throne, yet there remained no inconsiderable body of soldiers who reprobated the perfidy, and, flying to arms, would have instantly sacrificed him to the manes of their murdered general. They were, however, restrained from venting their fury on him by the vigorous exertion of those who favoured the cause of Bicon, and were, in all probability, partners in his treachery. The serpent which they had thus fondly cherished, in a short time aimed to spend its venom on its deliverers, and resolved to arrive at complete despotism, by the utter extirpation of those who had conferred at once life and sovereignty. The base intention was, however, discovered in time, and both Bicon, and the assassin Boxus, were seized: the latter was instantly put to death; but to perish by lingering torments, was the destiny assigned by an enraged soldiery, to the deeper and more complicated guilt of Bicon. Fortune again befriended the culprit; for while they were preparing to stretch on the rack his naked and trembling limbs, a sudden and violent tumult, from some unknown cause, spread through the whole army, assembled to witness the execution; every body rushed to arms, as if an enemy were at hand; the tormentors were terrified from proceeding in their dreadful business; and Bicon taking advantage of the general confusion, in that humiliating and defenceless condition, flew from rank to rank, earnestly implored the compassion, and a second time obtained the forgiveness of the army. This desperate and sanguinary monster ultimately was suffered to head the bands who, disgusted with that remote station, in a short period

afterwards, returned from Bactria to their native country. Such is Curtius's account of the first Greek insurrection in Bactria. *

After the death of Alexander, and on the second division of the empire among his generals, Bactria and Sogdiana, according to Arrian in Photius, † was assigned to Stasanor of Soli; Aria, and Drangiana to Stasander, which from the similarity of the names, and the proximity of the countries allotted, has, by some commentators, been thought to be only a corruption of the former appellative, and certainly Aria and Bactria afterwards formed but one kingdom. To Philip, finally, was allotted the government of Bactria, by Antipater, in the year before Christ 321, ‡ and by his able management of public affairs in that province, was probably laid the basis of its future greatness. During the turbulent period that succeeded, he probably, as well as the other governors in the remote northern regions of Asia, aspired at independence, and amidst the conflicts that distracted Asia, in a degree acquired it; but when Seleucus, victorious over his rival Antigonus, had again established himself at Babylon, he is expressly said to have reconquered Media, Bactria, Hyrcania, and all the provinces on the west of the Indus, formerly subjected by Alexander to the Macedonian yoke. § It was after these conquests that he recrossed the Indus and entered into that stipulation with Sandracottus, of which we have before given the particulars, as far as they can be collected. Bactria, during the remainder of the vigorous reign of that great military chieftian, probably remained in peaceable obedience to the imperial authority afterwards assumed by him in Asia, and we hear little more concerning this province till the year before Christ 255, at which precise period, according to Bayer's Chronological Table

* Curtius, lib. ix. cap. 7. † Arriani Excerpta apud Photium, p. 223.

‡ Usserii Annales, p. 404. § Justin. lib. xv. cap. 4. Appian in Syriacis, p. 130. and Ammianus Marcellinus, lib. xxiii.

of the Bactrian kings, and of the principal æras and events of their empire, the second great insurrection broke out, that for ever rent Bactria from the crown of Syria, and the yoke of the Seleucidæ.*

At what precise point of time THEODOTUS, at first the governor, and then the sovereign of this new-formed kingdom, was appointed to the præfecture, is uncertain; that he was a Greek, but not by birth a Macedonian, is a point better established. This aspiring Greek finding Antiochus Soter, the son of Seleucus, engaged in a long, distant, and sanguinary contest with Ptolemy Philadelphus, king of Egypt, by which his power was weakened, and his treasury exhausted, seized the opportunity which the relaxed state of government in the Eastern provinces afforded, of declaring himself independent.

Concerning Theodotus and his exploits, little more can be collected from classical authors of that period in which he flourished, than that he firmly established the empire which he had successfully founded; that he widely extended its boundaries, as well over the Massagetæ and other tribes northward, as down the stream of the Indus; reducing to their former tributary dependence on their Grecian conquerors, the nations inhabiting its shores; and thus marking out the line of future conquests, which his more daring successors were to fill up by penetrating into the interior of that rich empire, the object of the perpetual envy and avarice of every new adventurer on the field of Asiatic warfare. In this field, however, no small share of glory fell to Theodotus himself, since he is recorded by Justin, to have had no less than a thousand cities under his command in Bactria and its dependencies.†

Nearly about this period also, or, to mark so important an æra with the utmost precision, in the year in which L. Manlius Vulso and M. Attilius Regulus were consuls, which is coincident with the fourteenth year of the first Punic war, and corresponds to the year

* Bayer Hist. Regni Græc. Bact. p. 38. † Justin. lib. xli. cap. 4.

before Christ 250,* ARSACES, a prince, according to Strabo, of Scythian origin, of the tribe of Dahæ, and the first monarch of the celebrated dynasty denominated from him Arsacidæ, aspired to independence in Parthia.† Roused to revenge by a grievous insult offered to his family by the base præfect Agathocles, appointed by Antiochus Theos to govern the provinces beyond the Euphrates, and also additionally encouraged by the similar motives that influenced the insurrection of Theodotus, the debility that pervaded every part of the Syrian empire, this daring chief as rapidly accomplished, what he had so boldly planned, and after putting to deserved death the iniquitous governor and his associates in guilt, seized upon that province and Hyrcania, drove out the Macedonians from the whole of that district, and erected, at Hecatompylos, a standard at which all Asia was shortly after doomed to tremble, and which Rome herself beheld with dismay. This new and formidable empire, which for many centuries survived the Bactrian, will engage a considerable portion of the readers attention in the future pages of this history; and its commencement at this period is, therefore, thus accurately and decisively marked.

Towards the close of the short reign of about twelve years of Theodotus, over independent Bactria, some differences seem to have arisen between these illustrious founders of two mighty empires; and Arsaces, we are told by Bayer's authorities, was preparing to invade Bactria; but his son and successor, Theodotus *the Second*, found means to avert the impending storm, and prevent the rupture of two kingdoms, newly freed from a foreign yoke; kingdoms, which firmly united in friendly alliance, might be deemed invincible, but, at variance, must necessarily be at the mercy of their common foe.

Having presented the reader with a short geographical sketch, from Oriental sources, of the country styled Bactriana by the

* Usserii Annales, p. 490. † Strabo, lib. ii. p. 515.

ancients, before we proceed to the few particulars that marked the reign of the second king of Bactria, we shall endeavour to impress his mind with the just conception of what they mean by Parthia. The province properly called Parthia, is described by Sir William Jones to be the same with the Persian Irak* of the moderns, and is also called Cuhistan, *or the mountainous country*, because incircled by mountains, which form its strong barrier on every quarter. It had Media on the west; Hyrcania on the north; on the east Aria; and the desart Carmania on the south. In the early periods of the Persian, and even Macedonian, empires, it was not considered of importance sufficient to be made a province of, but was included in Hyrcania. Its capital was Hecatompylos, or the city *with an hundred gates*, the name evidently Greek, but whether the city itself was of Greek fabrication has not been satisfactorily ascertained. The modern city of Ispahan is supposed to have been founded on its ruins. Such were the contracted limits of the first Parthian monarchs who, notwithstanding temporary repulses, and occasional defeats, even of the most serious nature, soon enlarged them, rapidly conquering from their Asiatic rivals, Media, Persia, and Babylon, and in the reign of Mithridates, only the fifth in succession, giving supreme law to all the nations inhabiting from the Euphrates to Mount Caucasus. It will be our business occasionally to mark their progress, and detail their triumphs.

Theodotus succeeded his father in the year before Christ 243, and, as was before observed, immediately set about regaining for his empire the forfeited friendship of Arsaces, which he happily effected, and had the policy to enter into a close alliance with that monarch, for their mutual defence against foreign assault. In the mean time Antiochus Theos having perished by poison administered to him by his wife Laodice, in order to secure the succession to her son Seleucus Callinicus, in opposition to his offspring by Berenice,

* Short History of Persia, p. 13.

the daughter of Ptolemy; the consequences of this flagitious act were such as to convulse all Asia, by bringing her brother Ptolemy Euergetes, who had now succeeded to the throne of Egypt, at the head of an immense army into Syria, to revenge the cause of his sister and her son, both afterwards inhumanly murdered at the castle of Daphne, whither they had fled for shelter from his fury. The signal vengeance exacted, for this threefold murder, on the execrable assassins, the immense plunder carried back to Egypt by the conqueror, and in particular the two thousand five hundred pictures and statues, representing the mythology and the deities of Egypt, which Cambyses, when he ravaged that country, had carried into Persia, and for the restoration of which to their ancient and hallowed temples, the grateful Egyptians conferred on him the title of Euergetes, or the *benefactor*, are subjects that more properly belong to the history of Egypt and Syria, than the present. The vast extent of his triumphs too in Asia, which were but obscurely known from a single passage in Appian,* till the discovery of the Adulitic marble and its inscription, by Cosmas Indicopleustes, in the sixth century, and since that period extensively commented upon by many learned writers, would be foreign to our subject, did not that inscription positively affirm that Bactria was *not* among the conquered countries. That information is highly important, since it demonstrates the great power and resources of the Bactrian prince, whose well fortified dominions probably opposed a firm barrier to his further conquests; and therefore that part of it so connected with our history is inserted below.

Ptolemy Euergetes having received from his father the sovereignty of Egypt, Lybia, Syria, Phœnice, Cyprus, Lycia, Caria, and the Cyclades, assembled a mighty army of horse and foot, with a great fleet, and elephants, collected out of Troglodytica and Æthiopia, some of which had been taken by his father, and by

* Appian in Syriacis, p. 130, edit. Steph. Genevæ, 1592.

himself, and brought to Egypt, where they were trained for military service. With these forces he sailed for Asia, and having conquered all the provinces which lie on this side the Euphrates, Cilicia, Pamphylia, Ionia, the Hellespont, and Thrace, he crossed that river with all the forces of the conquered countries, and the kings of those nations, and reduced Mesopotamia, Babylonia, Susiana, Persia, Media, and all the country *as far as Bactria*.*

Parthia, therefore, and Bactria remained unmolested by Ptolemy, and that apparently for two reasons; first, because they were strongly fortified by brave and skilful princes; and, secondly, because those princes were, from their recent revolt, in a state of direct hostility with their rightful sovereign, the sole object of his vengeance. After the retreat of Ptolemy to Egypt, Seleucus Callinicus and his brother, Antiochus Hierax, or the *Hawk*, so denominated from his insatiate rapacity, by their rival contests for dominion, completed the devastation of the Syrian empire. Those contests were long and furious, and it was during their continuance, that Arsaces and Theodotus found an opportunity greatly to strengthen themselves in their respective kingdoms, and widely to extend their limits over the adjoining districts. While the eastern provinces of the empire were thus curtailed in their extent by these enterprising princes, Eumenes and Attalus, successive kings of Pergamus, were making terrible inroads upon the western provinces, and had already seized upon the greatest part of Asia Minor. Yet could not the ensanguined rage of the contending brothers be restrained either by a sense of decency, or the dictates of policy.

After suffering various vicissitudes in the field, Seleucus, at length, had the good fortune to drive Antiochus from the bounds of Asia, and compel him to seek shelter in Egypt, where he was betrayed and murdered. This triumph over his antagonist, gave the former full

* Cosmas Indicopleustes apud Montfaucon, in Collect. Patrum, p. 140.

leisure to attend to the internal affairs of the empire, to the restoration of public order and tranquillity, as well as to the rectifying of many flagrant abuses, which from the long want of an active and vigorous system of policy, had invaded every department of government. It would have been prudent in a prince whose progress in military life had been only marked by one decisive victory, if he had confined his exertions to the wise domestic administration of the affairs of those parts of his empire that yet remained unmutilated, rather than have made that precipitate attack, which he immediately commenced upon Arsaces, with a view to recover Parthia from the grasp of that formidable usurper. The consequences were disgrace and defeat to himself, and a powerful consolidation of the power of his adversary, who was probably assisted in this contest by his Bactrian ally. Disdaining to learn a lesson from past misfortunes, this rash prince again advanced to the unequal conflict, maintained by resolute bands of hardy mountaineers, determined to be free, against enervated and ill disciplined, though numerous, troops. Arsaces on this occasion, united the consummate skill with the undaunted valour of a great commander, for affecting, according to Justin, to fly northward among the Aspadani,* he led his army into the inhospitable countries that border on Caucasus and the Caspian Sea, where they perished by famine and the arrows of the Parthians, who, as they fled, discharged them in torrents on the pursuing foe. Then, seizing a proper opportunity, they rushed furiously upon their disordered ranks, put them to total rout, and made the incautious monarch himself prisoner. The day on which this fatal engagement took place, was ever after holden as a most solemn festival in every period of the Parthian empire, as the joyful æra of their complete emancipation from the yoke of Syria. With respect to the captured prince himself, he was carried back in that degraded state to the

* From Aspa, the modern Ispahan. Justin, xli. cap. 5.

metropolis of Parthia, and detained a prisoner at the court of Arsaces, where he was treated with regal distinction till his death, which happened about four years afterwards.

This, therefore, is the true, the grand epoch of the Parthian empire, considered on its more extended scale; as this decisive victory immediately put Arsaces in possession of all that part of the captured sovereign's dominions which he thought it prudent to occupy, or had ability to retain; and in fact, during that period, he must be considered as invested with all the power, though not holding the sceptre, of the kings of Syria. He certainly deserved that high distinction with far more justice than the pageant of royalty who now reigned under the assumed name of Ceraunus, or *the thunderer*, without a gleam of intellect to plan, or the smallest nerve to execute, the bold designs which the exigency of the times imperiously required. During that short imbecil reign of three years, nothing great or splendid was undertaken, or effected, at least in which the Greater Asia was materially concerned; but the premature death, which befel this prince in the 225th year before Christ, opened the way for scenes of the highest interest and glory on the great theatre of Asia, and called early into action the heroic spirit and renowned military talents of his brother Antiochus, afterwards, from a series of brilliant successes, justly surnamed *the Great*. But previously to our entering upon the detail of them, so far as may be necessary to the illustration of the transactions carried on in Parthia, Bactria, and India, whose history about this period becomes inseparably blended, we must revert to the affairs of the second of those empires, and notice a revolution of considerable magnitude, that greatly affected its internal tranquillity, and finally subverted its existing dynasty of Greek princes.

Theodotus the Second, apparently firmly seated on his throne, and strengthened by his alliance with Arsaces, is suddenly, during the minority of Antiochus, attacked by a great army, headed by one

Euthydemus, of Magnesia, and called by historians, his brother, but certainly of no very near affinity, if of any, as must be evident from the words of his embassy, afterwards sent to treat for peace with Antiochus, and without any adequate cause assigned, after being defeated in a great battle, is driven from it by the victor, who usurps his seat upon it. This event is stated by Bayer, with tolerable probability, to have taken place in the year 220 before Christ; and the same author is of opinion that, as he is said to have been of Magnesia, a city so warmly attached to the cause of Callinicus, as to have entered into a treaty with Smyrna to support his cause by their utmost exertions; a treaty still existing in legible Greek capitals on a column preserved among the Arundel marbles at Oxford; he most probably was employed as the general of the king of Syria, to recover this province, and that he employed in this service the imperial forces; but that, deluded by ambition and infatuated by the lust of power, he appropriated to himself what, in justice, he ought inviolably to have preserved for his lawful sovereign, in whose cause he had fought. This, though the most plausible, account of the matter, is still by no means satisfactory, since it is in direct contradiction to the message above alluded to, in which Euthydemus acknowledges no claim of obedience due from himself to the Syrian monarchs; whereas by this act his allegiance had been very grossly and very flagitiously violated. It is possible, however, that Euthydemus might only have made use of a pretext of this kind to induce the friends and adherents of the royal party to enlist under his standard, without the least idea of ever resigning the sovereignty, if successful in the attainment of it; that he was a Greek is evident from his name, and to his military talents his present and future conduct bear abundant testimony.

Whatever might have been the cause, and whatever the circumstances of this invasion, for the particulars are very little known, the revolution was complete. Theodotus, utterly routed in battle,

was ignominiously driven from his throne, and Euthydemus ascending it, governed his new subjects with equal wisdom and justice, happily tempered a necessary rigour with a salutary clemency, still more widely extended the glory of the Bactrian name, and deeper fixed the foundations of her growing empire. In the undisturbed possession of that throne we shall, for the present, leave him, and return to Antiochus.

Antiochus succeeded to the throne of Syria, and was crowned at Antioch, at the early age of fifteen, in the year 225 before Christ. Achæus, the steady friend to the fortunes of his family, the avenger of the death of the late king, and the preserver of the crown, first offered to himself, for the lawful heir, guided him with his counsels, and fired his tender mind with the love of glory. No kingdom was ever more involved in difficulties than that to which Antiochus succeeded; never were vigorous counsels and measures more necessary. Achæus himself was not inactive in the field; and being appointed governor of Asia Minor, soon recovered that part of it which had been wrested from the empire by the daring invader Attalus, whom he drove back within the limits of his own kingdom of Pergamus. Molo and Alexander, two noblemen high in the young king's favour, were appointed governors, the one of Media, the other of Persia, with orders to rescue the other provinces of the higher Asia from the grasp of usurpation. But these noblemen, despising the youth of the king, and aspiring at independence, seized upon the provinces committed to their care, and assumed the honours of sovereignty. A considerable force was immediately sent against them, but was defeated on the banks of the Tigris; and by this means the rebel prefects were enabled to add to their usurped domain, the rich provinces of Babylonia and Mesopotamia. The young king himself was occupied in an attempt to recover Cœlo-Syria from Ptolemy Euergetes, who had conquered it in the preceding reign of Callinicus, and still kept possession of it. The cautious

vigilance, however, of the Egyptian governor, having strongly fortified and filled with troops, all the passes of the mountains in that region, and little hopes of success attending the enterprize, while the distracted affairs of the east required the most vigorous exertions, he, for the present, relinquished it, and commenced his march for the Euphrates, trusting that his personal appearance there at the head of a powerful army, would either awe the insurgents to spontaneous obedience, or in a general engagement, must inevitably secure victory to the rightful sovereign of Asia. He was not deceived in his expectation: as the two armies approached each other, a considerable desertion took place among the rebel troops, and, after a conflict of no great obstinacy or duration, the latter were put to a total rout, while their chiefs, after in vain seeking safety in precipitate flight, in the phrenzy of desperation, with their own hands, on themselves and on their families, avenged the crime of their disloyalty.*

Antiochus, thus triumphant in the eastern quarter of his empire, and resolved, if practicable, to restore to that empire its ancient extended limits, as it flourished in the time of Seleucus Nicator, its great founder, now meditated the subjugation of all the revolted kingdoms, and of Parthia and Bactria among the rest; but for the present confined his military operations to the chieftains, barbarian or Greek, who had established themselves in the neighbouring provinces, and particularly in that part of Media called Atropatia, still retained by the posterity of the governor of that name, who had been appointed to superintend the province by Alexander himself; but who, after his death, amidst the dissentions of the Macedonian generals, had made himself independent in it, and assumed the name of king. In this expedition also, he was completely successful.

With the celebrated but unfortunate battle fought by this prince

* Polybius, lib. v. p. 400.

with Ptolemy Philopater, at Raphia, with the unexpected revolt and consequent destruction of Achæus in Asia Minor, this history has no other concern, than merely to notice those facts as affording Antiochus leisure to pursue the great object which he had nearest his heart, the reduction of the revolted provinces of Parthia and Bactria. To obtain this object, he had now a fresh incitement; for Arsaces, king of the former, and son of that Arsaces who founded the empire, had taken advantage of his long absence during the protracted campaigns in the west against Ptolemy and Achæus, to enter Media with a large army, and annex that province to his other usurped dominions. Enraged at this insolence, Antiochus immediately commenced the most active preparations to avenge it, and placed himself at the head of all his troops. A vast desart was to be passed before the royal army could arrive at the frontiers of Media, and Arsaces, in hopes of destroying his enemy toiling over its sands, by the pangs of thirst, gave orders that the springs of water should every where be stopt and the wells polluted; but the sagacious forethought of Antiochus had provided against this danger, previously dispatching some squadrons of horse to scour the desart and guard from injury the fountains and wells. It was the maxim of the Parthians to avoid, as far as possible in war, a pitched battle, as inconsistent with their mode of fighting; and they are said ever to have been far more terrible in their retreat than in their onset. It is probable that on this occasion, Arsaces did not deviate from the usual practice of his nation, and that his flight first into Parthia, and then into the rugged mountainous defiles of Hyrcania, were at least as much the effect of finesse, as of fear. Antiochus, determined in his object, intrepidly pursued the fugitive monarch, dislodged his troops from their hilly fortresses, pursued them through the narrow defiles, and finally collecting in the plains of Hyrcania his scattered army, marched to Syringis, its capital, which he invested with all his forces.

Syringis was neither built to maintain a siege, nor could long sustain the vigorous attacks of the army of Antiochus. It quickly capitulated; and he now became master of the capital, but by no means of the valiant usurper of the kingdom of Hyrcania, who having by this time, collected together from all the countries through which he had retreated, an immense army, consisting of no less than an hundred thousand foot and twenty thousand horse, began now to display a formidable front, and to make a bold stand against the invading army. Several partial and bloody conflicts, but no general battle, took place, in which the Parthians had the superiority; and Antiochus, whose army was perpetually harrassed, without gaining any decisive advantage, becoming at length wearied out with this procrastination of a war, to which he saw no prospect of a speedy or fortunate termination, was induced to listen to proposals for a settlement of their differences; proposals which the former was as happy to offer, as the latter was eager to accept. The terms of pacification were very concise, and withal, extremely favourable to Arsaces, viz. that he should continue to possess the kingdoms of Parthia and Hyrcania, subordinate to the imperial house, and assist Antiochus with his army in the recovery of its other eastern domains, revolted from its authority.*

This object accomplished, his army powerfully reinforced by the troops of Arsaces, whose alliance with the Bactrian sovereigns might have ceased with the exiled dynasty of Theodotus, the Syrian monarch pursued his march towards that province, or rather now established empire. Euthydemus was by no means unprepared for this sudden and formidable invasion; and, on the banks of the Arius, a river of Aria, had advantageously stationed a body of ten thousand horse to harrass their march and watch their motions, while he himself lay encamped with the body of his army at Taguria, a city of the same province not far distant, but whose precise situation

* Polyb. lib. ii. p. 651. Justin, lib. xli. cap. 5. Bayer, p. 69.

Bayer has in vain laboured to fix*. Antiochus having learned this intelligence from his scouts, when only about the distance of three days journey from the river, immediately hastened his progress thither. When arrived within one day's march of it, on the evening preceding that day, having also received intelligence that the cavalry which kept guard on the banks of the river, during the day, were accustomed, at night, to retire into a certain city in that neighbourhood, distant about twenty stadia, he issued peremptory orders that the army and baggage should be in readiness to move forward on the first dawn of day, and left ample directions with his generals for their conduct in the course of it. He himself, after short refreshment, taking with him the whole body of horse and light armed troops, immediately pushed rapidly on to the banks of the Arius, which they reached unperceived, amid the dead silence and darkness of the night. By day-break, all had completely passed the intervening stream; and Antiochus, whose impetuous courage seems to have hurried him on to the attack considerably before the main body, suddenly found himself with the advanced battalions that formed his body guard, close in with the adverse army, which, in consequence of signals displayed on the city towers, that the enemy was at hand, was already drawn up to oppose him in battle array.

Observing himself thus circumstanced, and determined to strike terror into the enemy by an effort of bravery, worthy of so great a commander, at the head of these advanced troops, which did not exceed two thousand men, he furiously attacked the whole ten thousand of the Bactrian cavalry. By the impetuosity of the onset, the first division was quickly thrown into disorder and routed; but the second and third division coming up, fresh and vigorous, to their relief, severely revenged the defeat of their comrades, and the king and the brave bands that fought by his side were nearly surrounded

* Bayer Hist. Reg. Græc. Bact. p. 69.

by their superior numbers, when fortunately, and almost in the last extremity, his general, Paneatolus, arrived with the remainder of the Syrian cavalry, rescued the wounded monarch, who, during the engagement having had his horse killed under him, was bravely combating on foot with a host of foes, put the Bactrians to total rout, and pursued them even to the distant camp of Euthydemus. Euthydemus, after this disaster, did not think it prudent to risque all in a general engagement with troops flushed with victory, but retired to Zariaspe, (synonymous with Bactra,) in order to consolidate his strength, and protect his capital. The victorious troops that night returned to the river, where they were joined by the grand army, and whence they soon commenced their march towards the capital of the fugitive prince. The wound received by Antiochus was a severe one in the mouth, several of his teeth being beat out by the blows, but no dangerous consequences resulted from it.*

Polybius, to whom we are indebted for the above account of the transactions of Antiochus in the Northern Asia, has favoured us with no farther particulars of the very extended campaign carried on with Euthydemus for the recovery of Bactria, than that wearied out with its prolongation, owing to the intrepid courage and masterly manœuvres of that warlike prince, Antiochus, in the present, as in the former, instance, was at length induced to listen to terms of accommodation. For this purpose Euthydemus sent to him one Tineas, in quality of ambassador, who modestly, but firmly, urged, in behalf of his sovereign, that it was the extreme of injustice in Antiochus, thus obstinately to persevere in carrying on a devastating war against a sovereign prince who owed him no allegiance, but held the kingdom of Bactria by right of conquest over those who had long ago rendered themselves independent of the Syrian empire, but whose descendants he had vanquished in battle, and driven from the throne; that of whatever offence *they* might have been

* Vide Polybius, lib. x. p. 563. edit. Casaubon.

guilty, from *him* Antiochus had certainly received no cause of provocation, and that, in fact, the title of the Syrian kings to their empire was not better founded than his own to Bactria, since it was only the just reward of valour, purchased amid the accumulated toils and hazards of many a bloody field. Tineas farther represented to Antiochus, that a sense of mutual prudence ought to induce either party instantly to sheathe the destroying sword, for that numerous hordes of Scythians were collecting on the northern frontiers of Bactria, determined to take the utmost advantage of that fierce and long continued warfare, by which they had equally debilitated themselves and convulsed the kingdom, and were ready at a moment's warning, to pour into its bosom, their barbarous myriads, and rend the prize which they so ardently desired, from the contentious grasp of both.*

By these representations, strengthened by his own zealous wishes, on terms not entirely degrading to his honour and dignity, to put a period to a war at once so fruitless and so protracted, Antiochus was persuaded to listen to proposals for a speedy accommodation of their differences; the leading article in which seems to have been, that Euthydemus should surrender to Antiochus all his train of elephants, and, in return for that tributary homage, should, like Arsaces, still retain both the title and power of sovereign, subordinate to the Syrian monarch, the lord paramount of Asia. For the purpose of ratifying this treaty, as well as with a view to cultivate the esteem of Antiochus, the Bactrian king sent his son Demetrius to the camp of the former, who, admiring the majesty, beauty, and matured understanding of the youth, pronounced him worthy to be the son of a king, and the heir of a great kingdom; he, consequently confirmed and publicly acknowledged his father's title to that of Bactria, and more closely to cement the alliance, gave the young prince his daughter in marriage. The remaining articles that

* Polybii Hist. lib. xi. p. 591. idem edit.

related to the compact entered into between the two kings, were then separately discussed and agreed to, and the whole finally ratified by the most solemn oaths. This memorable event is placed by Bayer in the year 205 before Christ, and 51 of the æra of the Bactrian princes.*

Shortly after, having received the elephants agreed to be surrendered, and bestowed considerable largesses upon his soldiers, out of the ample presents sent him by Euthydemus, he led his army over the Indian Caucasus, and paid that visit to, and entered into that treaty with, Sophagasenes, the particulars of which, as briefly recorded by Polybius, have been presented to the reader in the preceding chapter. Antiochus, as there observed, having increased the number of his elephants to one hundred and fifty, recrossed the Indus, and marching through Arachosia and Drangiana, where the distracted state of public affairs equally required his presence for the restoration of order and tranquillity, passed the winter in Carmania. Early in the ensuing spring, he recommenced his march back through Persia, Babylon, and Mesopotamia, and reached Antioch after an absence of seven years, and an expedition in which he had covered himself with that true glory which results from the exertion of heroic fortitude directed by concurrent wisdom, and success used with moderation. Happy would it have been for him, if in his latter career, and amidst his long and disastrous conflicts with the Romans, he had observed the same cautious conduct, and been guided by similar wise counsels. To record those, is fortunately not our province; we return to the history of the Greek princes of Bactria.

Of Euthydemus little is known, more than that, firmly established on his throne, according to Bayer's probable conjecture, he turned his arms first against the Scythian Nomades, who had in the late war threatened his kingdom with invasion, and then having

* Polybii Hist. lib. xi. p. 592.

repressed the insolence of those barbarians, passed the remainder of his life in the enlargement of his Indian territories. In this latter expedition, however, he seems to have been unfortunate, but we know nothing certain of him after this period, nor has the Oriental historian, by the most elaborate research into the classical writers of that day, been enabled to discover in what manner, or at what precise æra, he terminated his life or reign. The highly-favoured Demetrius having never succeeded to the throne of Bactria, is a circumstance very corroborative of the supposition, that they both were ultimately compelled to bow before the superior might of MENANDER, upon whose history we are about to enter, and who is expressly styled by Bayer's authorities, king of India and Bactria.*

* Bayer, ubi supra, p. 42.

CHAPTER V.

Continuing the History of the Bactrian and Parthian Empires as connected with India.—MENANDER, *fourth Sovereign of Bactria—his extensive Conquests, and elevated Character.*—DEMETRIUS, *his Nephew, succeeds to his Dominions in Western India.*—EUCRATIDES, *the fifth Sovereign, ascends the vacant Throne—his Capital attacked by a Scythian Army—the Scythians repulsed by the Aid of* MITHRIDATES, *King of Parthia.—The Parthian History resumed.—That Empire exalted to its highest Pitch of Glory by Mithridates—aided in his ambitious Projects by Eucratides, in whose Absence his Capital is beseiged by Demetrius.—The Defeat and Death of Demetrius—his Indian Territories seized upon and divided between the confederated Monarchs.—Eucratides assassinated by his Son of the same Name, who ascends his Throne, but after an inglorious Reign of twelve Years, being attacked on one Side by the Parthians, and on the other, by the Scythians, miserably perishes, and the Bactrian Empire becomes extinct.—Summary History of the Scythian or Tartar Tribes inhabiting the immense Regions of Northern Asia, and of the Train of important Events which combined to render them Masters of the Empire of Bactria.*

MENANDER, by some writers asserted to have been the brother, and by others, only a relation, of Euthydemus, by whatever means, seems to have been firmly seated on the throne of Bactria about ten years after the departure of Antiochus, or in the year before Christ 195. He appears rather to have been one of those Greek princes whose valour had enabled them to establish themselves in the southern districts of India, and possibly, as was before observed, the

very Menander mentioned above, in an extract from the Periplus, with whose name and titles the drachmæ found near Barygaza were inscribed. He is said to have subdued more nations of India than even Alexander himself, and to have extended his empire on the one hand to Pattala and Zizerus, on the Malabar coast, and quite to Bactra and Drapsa on the other.* He is recorded to have possessed this immense domain, united with Demetrius; partem ipse, partem Demetrius Euthydemi Bactriorum regis filius; which words of Strabo are, in my humble opinion, so decisive, as almost to subvert the argument of Bayer, that Demetrius did not succeed at least, to a portion of his father's kingdom, though the whole passage be cited by that writer, expressly to prove the contrary of the position.† Whatever may be the genuine fact, no name more renowned, in virtue or in valour, appears in the catalogue of the Bactrian kings, than that of Menander, though the usual obscurity of the period hangs over the general transactions of his glorious reign of about fifteen years. After having widely extended his conquests in India, and raised to its highest point of elevation the glory of the Greek princes of Bactria, he was seized with a violent fever, which terminated his life, just at the period when he was meditating to retort on the Syrian monarchy, at this time utterly debilitated and exhausted by its unfortunate contests with Rome, the former invasion of the Bactrian kingdom by Antiochus, now succeeded by Seleucus, surnamed Philopater, a prince not destitute of courage or abilities, but absolutely restricted from exerting them, by the circumstances attendant on his father's disgraceful defeat on the fatal field of Magnesia. Plutarch has given us the noblest idea of the character of Menander, by recording the following fact, viz. that so highly was he revered by his subjects, for the love of justice and the moderate use of

* Strabonis Geograph. p. 355, 356.

† Bayer, p. 75. Demetrium, he asserts, neque successisse Menandro, neque omnino Bactriorum fuisse regem. He probably succeeded to his Indian domains.

almost unbounded power, that many cities of his empire contended with violence for the honour of having his body deposited among them, and that no other method could be found of allaying the contentions excited on this account, than by burning the body, and distributing among them equal portions of the ashes of the deceased prince. These ashes were deposited in magnificent monuments erected to his honour in almost every city of the vast empire of Bactriana.*

Though Demetrius be not numbered by Bayer among the Greek kings of Bactria, yet, for the reasons above stated, I think we ought not wholly to exclude him from that dynasty, especially as he seems, after the death of Menander, to have attained the sovereign sway not only over the regions of India immediately bordering upon the Bactrian territory, but over all the immense district conquered by Menander, as far as the mouth of the Indus, and the coast of Malabar.† Bayer quotes Isidore of Charax, who wrote the history of the Parthian dynasties, as mentioning a city called Demetrius, the metropolis of Arachosia, which province, we before remarked, formed a part of the Bactrian empire, and he observes, was probably so called from this Demetrius. He remarks also, in Ptolemy's Geography, a city situated between the Hydaspes and the Indus, but nearer to the Indus than the former river, called Euthydemia, which, with great probability, he supposes to have been built by Demetrius, in honour of his father Euthydemus.‡ He bears the character of a wise and just prince, and was by no means inferior in valour and policy to his martial ancestors. If Demetrius cannot justly be ranked among the princes who regularly succeeded and actually reigned on the throne of Bactria, yet still his extensive domain in India, and his descent from those princes, at least

* Plutarchi Opera, p. 821. Arrian. Peripl. p. 32.

† Bayer, p. 86. Menandro autem mortuo Demetrius potuerit invito Eucratide *totam Indiam*, quæ Menandri fuerat, in potestatem redigere. ‡ Ib. p. 84.

entitle him to a distinguished place in these pages. After enjoying his Indian Sovereignty in undisturbed tranquillity during a long series of years, and penetrating, as is positively asserted by Bayer, even beyond the Ganges,* with a Greek army; after having been thus honoured in his youth by Antiochus, and passed his riper years with unequalled renown on the embattled plain, this great man was unfortunate enough to have the close of his life covered with defeat and shame, and to perish in disgraceful exile, as will be more particularly noticed in the history of the following reign.

Previously, however, to that history, it is necessary that the reader's attention should, for a short period, be again directed to the affairs of the Parthian empire, which we have seen, at the commencement of the revolt which exalted them to the rank of independent kingdoms, were so intimately blended with those of Bactria. The alliance between the two sovereigns, naturally ceased at the period of the attack of Antiochus on Bactria, assisted, according to compact, by a portion of the army of the valiant but perfidious Arsaces the Second. This latter sovereign had been succeeded by Priapatius, though he is frequently denominated Arsaces, a name common to all the kings of that illustrious line. Priapatius, however, was no great honour to it, being a prince who possessed no spark of ambition nor spirit of enterprize, and whose decease, after an inglorious reign of fifteen years, made way for his son Phrahates.† This monarch obtained a very considerable portion of celebrity, by the conquest of the Mardi, a fierce tribe of barbarians, inhabiting the mountains of Media in the vicinity of the Caspian Sea, who had never been subdued till the invasion of Alexander, and then with extreme difficulty. The sceptre of Parthia was bequeathed, in violation of the right of his children, who were numerous, but young, to his brother Mithridates, a prince of the

* Demetrius non modo regiones eas (Menandri) obtinuit, sed arma quoque ultra Gangem circumtulit. Bayer, p. 89. † Justin. lib. xlvi. cap. 5.

most elevated talents; renowned for wisdom, valour, and probity. Under this august sovereign, the Parthian empire rose beyond all former reigns in glory, and by his arms, not less than his sagacious policy, he held in a kind of tributary subjection, nearly all the kingdoms of the Greater Asia. Having by degrees torn from the Syrian empire its richest præfectures, he was assiduously preparing, from his immense resources, the means of wresting the remainder from the weak hand of Seleucus Nicator, the reigning king of Syria; but who, sunk in boundless debauchery, at Antioch, or engaged in incessant contests with rebel chieftains in the west, possessed neither inclination nor leisure, at that time, to attend to the involved concerns of his Eastern provinces.

There still remained, however, on the plains of Asia one intrepid warrior, the Demetrius just mentioned, at that time equally unconquered in mind as in person. Bending with years, yet with a firm hand he grasped the sabre that defended the Indian frontier, on the same spot on which Porus defied to battle the first Greek invader of that envied region of the earth. Happy would it have been for Demetrius, had he ever continued solely on the defensive; but as it was the artful policy of Mithridates, to gain over by alliance and kindness, those whom he despaired of subjugating by harsh means, he had made a proffer of his services to Eucratides, the reigning king of Bactria, against the Scythians, then in arms against the latter, and the avowed implacable enemy of both potentates. An intimate friendship between the Parthian and Bactrian princes, was the result of the gratuitous aid thus afforded by the former in the moment of extreme peril, and which, by the vigorous exertion of their united forces terminated not only in the complete success of that enterprize, but at a future period in the ruin of Demetrius and the partition of the Indian empire between those mighty princes.

Eucratides, the first of the name, is said to have been the son of this very Demetrius, though that fact is justly combated by Bayer,

and subsequent circumstances apparently prove his conjectures to be well founded; for, though among the unprincipled and sanguinary chieftains of Greek origin, who succeeded Alexander in his Asiatic dominions, the ties of nature and the bonds of duty, were frequently trampled upon, yet the perpetual and obstinate jealousy, the conflicts and determined spirit of revenge that existed between Eucratides and Demetrius, during the whole of their respective reigns, without the least relaxation or attempt to compromise their differences, as might naturally be expected to take place between father and son, render all idea of such near affinity absolutely incredible. His immediate descent, therefore, and the exact period of his ascending the throne, are alike involved in obscurity, though it may be collected from a passage in Justin, that he began to reign in Bactria, nearly about the same time that Mithridates succeeded to the Parthian sceptre.* Bayer fixes the succession of Eucratides to the Bactrian throne, to the year 181 before Christ; but, at that time Phrahates certainly sate on that of Parthia, and there must at least have been five years difference between the commencement of their respective reigns. At whatever time, and by whatever means, whether by violence or by hereditary claims, he acceded to that distinguished station, the early part of his long reign seems to have been totally absorbed in perpetual and bloody conflicts with the barbarous hordes of Scythians, who kept constantly hovering over the northern frontiers of his empire, impatient to seize, as eventually was the case, under the weaker government of his son and successor, upon that beautiful and abundant country. The provinces of Sogdiana and Drangiana, that seem to have formed a part of the Bactrian empire, are particularly mentioned by Justin, as having risen in arms against him,† effectually to quell

* Justin, lib. xli. cap. 6. Eodem ferme tempore, sicuti in Parthis Mithridates, ita in Bactris Eucratides, magni uterque viri, regna ineunt.

† Justin, ibid. By the Drangaritani in Justin, can be meant no other than the inhabitants of Drangiana, a province bordering on Arachosia.

whom, he called in the aid of the Parthians, to whom the Macedonian Greeks, from equal terror and detestation of their oppressive tyranny, ever bore an inveterate hatred.

His victory over them, though retarded, was complete; and it is extremely probable, that in return for the assistance of the Parthian troops on this occasion, Eucratides lent his army and his talents to the Bactrian prince, in support of those ambitious projects that exalted him to greater power than was possessed, even by the Syrian monarch himself. This continued attachment to the Parthian interest, and close alliance with its sovereign, was looked upon by the high-minded Greeks, as a degradation, and little better than a feudal dependence upon that monarch, and yet every action in the reign of Eucratides, which was a series of glorious events, proved that he himself possessed a mind too lofty and impracticable to be the dupe of the insidious policy, or the inordinate ambition of another. This connection with the Parthian sovereign, if he were an usurper, was possibly necessary to the support of his assumed authority over the refractory Greeks; if a legitimate prince, it was a measure of judicious caution against the invading Scythians. During, however, this prolonged absence, from his capital, the nobles and principal Greeks of that city invited the son of their old and most beloved monarch, to come and reign over them, promising him their utmost assistance towards placing him on the throne of his father. Demetrius lost no time in obeying the summons; and soon after his return from the Sogdian war, crowned with glory indeed, but with forces greatly reduced by its length, and a treasury nearly exhausted, Eucratides found himself closely besieged in his capital by an army of sixty thousand men, with Demetrius, in this place expressly called by Justin, KING OF INDIA,* at their head.

Concerning this siege, we have no farther particulars, than what we learn from the same concise author, that it lasted five months,

* Justin, lib. xli. cap. 6.

and finally terminated disgracefully to the Indian sovereign, who was so harassed by the frequent and daring incursions of the enemy's cavalry, from their flying camp without the walls, that after that period had elapsed, he was compelled to abandon the enterprize. And now Eucratides, having recruited his army and his coffers, from being the assailed, became the assailant, and with the co-operation of his Parthian ally, forcing Demetrius back beyond the Indian frontier, gained from him all the conquests which he had successively made in those vast regions, and finally drove him, at the advanced age of seventy-eight years, from a throne in which he had triumphed for so extended a period, in the plenitude of power and glory. The expression so frequently occurring in Bayer, of the princes of this line having conquered ALL INDIA, must, in general, be understood in a far more limited acceptation, as implying the kingdoms of Taxiles, Porus, and the countries on each side the Indus, to Pattala; an immense tract indeed, extending in length above a thousand miles, but that is, after all, a very inferior portion of the immense region of India, considered by the ancients as the third part of the habitable world. Demetrius, however, must in the course of his long reign, have obtained the sovereignty of the more eastern provinces of India, if not over the Gangaridæ themselves, and the districts bordering on the mouth of the river from which their name is derived; for we find, on the division of the empire of Demetrius between the two invading princes, that Mithridates had the provinces lying between the Hydaspes and the Indus assigned to him, and Eucratides all the remainder on the east and south quarter of his Indian possessions.* Mithridates, a few years afterwards, when Eucratides was treacherously murdered by his son, certainly extended his conquests more easterly; for that mighty and politic prince, who carried to its highest point of elevation, the power and magnificence of the Parthian monarchy, had, as already observed, added to his

* Bayer and his authorities, p. 90, 91.

dominions, most of the great provinces of Higher Asia bordering on the Indus, which properly formed a part of the Syrian empire. When the fortune of war had thrown that prince into his power, he seized upon all the other provinces lying between the Indus and the Euphrates; Persia, Media, Babylonia, and Mesopotamia. The death of Eucratides, with whom he was in alliance, but with whose son he was soon involved in a bloody war, opened an easy ingress into the more eastern provinces which the former possessed in India, which he doubtless secured by the means usual in those turbulent times, so that not even the Ganges itself formed the distant boundary of the astonishing empire which that great warrior as ably governed as he had valiantly obtained. Thus, in fact, was the Parthian king sovereign of India, in as strict a sense as ever the Bactrian monarch could be said to have been; a circumstance which, I trust, will fully justify the extended account of that dynasty in the present chapter. Their sovereignty, indeed, over at least that part of India, originally explored and conquered by the Macedonian Greeks, seems to have continued, in a greater or less degree, till the subversion of the power of the Arsacidæ, about two hundred years after Christ, by Ardeshir, or Artaxares, the head of that of Sassan.

Concerning the death of Demetrius, we find no particulars among the scattered fragments that remain to us, relative to this obscure portion of Greek history. With respect to Eucratides having thus united, in his own person, the sovereignty of the two kingdoms, on his return to Bactria he assumed, and ever after impressed upon his coins, the name of Βασιλευς Μεγαλος, or the Great King, which he indeed well merited. During his absence, and even in the midst of these brilliant victories in the *south* of Asia, the Scythian barbarians were by no means inactive; but, collecting from every quarter, committed the most dreadful ravages in the *northern* districts, and seemed to threaten the whole kingdom with destruction. By his fortitude and vigilance, however, their insolence was repressed, the

evil day was still retarded, and to overawe them, he erected, as we collect from Strabo, a great city above Bactria, which he called after his own name, Eucratidia.*

The close of the long life of Eucratides was, like that of the vanquished Demetrius, inglorious. Oppressed with years and the fatigues of a mighty empire, he had admitted his son of the same name, to a participation of its honours and its cares. But as that son detested the close connection into which his father had entered with the Parthians, he seized an opportunity, while they were both together in the same chariot on a journey, to put the old man to death; and without remorse, adds Justin,† saw the streaming blood, as they proceeded, run from the fatal wound through the carriage upon the ground. So far, indeed, from feeling remorse was the impious parricide, that he publicly gloried in the bloody fact; anathematized his memory as the betrayer of his country to the Parthians; and refused to his dishonoured and mangled body, the rites of decent sepulture. Thus miserably perished the first Eucratides, the most renowned and powerful of all the Bactrian sovereigns; but both the assassin who accomplished his destruction, and the nation who exulted in it, soon felt the signal vengeance of offended heaven; for, in the space of little more than twelve years, that assassin was ignominiously driven from a throne polluted with paternal blood, and the Greek Bactrian kingdom ceased to be numbered among the sovereignties of Asia.

The above event took place, according to Bayer's Table, in the year 145 before Christ, and the 110th of the Bactrian æra. In his publication may be seen an engraving of Eucratides, with the illustrious assumed title before mentioned, copied from a silver Greek medal, found in the neighbourhood of Astrachan, and preserved in the imperial cabinet of St. Petersburg. Impressions of this and some other heads of distinguished chieftains, whose exploits are recorded

* Strabonis Geograph. p. 356. † Justin, lib. xli. cap. 6.

in the course of this history, shall hereafter be collectively presented on one plate to the curious reader. Let us, for the present, mark the closing scene of the Bactrian glory, doomed to premature extinction by the combined madness and presumption of a cruel and ambitious sovereign.

Eucratides the Second was no sooner solely and firmly seated on the throne, than he zealously entered into the closest alliance with Demetrius Nicator, king of Syria; an alliance which had for its basis and avowed object, the utter subversion of the power of the Parthian monarch, and in which most of the neighbouring provinces, particularly the Persians, Medes, and Elymæans, joined. These, accustomed to the mild and enlightened government of the Macedonian Greeks, had long reluctantly submitted to the tyranny and barbarous pride of the Arsacidæ, who w ere originally of theruder Scythian stock. Demetrius, in the vain confidence of conquering his eastern provinces from the power that had so long usurped them, now expeditiously commenced his march for the Higher Asia, and having crossed the Euphrates at the head of a vast army, more formidable for their numbers than valour, multitudes of brave Greeks from all quarters enlisted under the Syrian banner. By their assistance, he at first gained several battles against the enemy, but that enemy proved eventually too wary, too alert, and too sagacious for a prince so inexperienced in intricate warfare, and from long debauchery, so enervated both in body and mind, as was Demetrius. The Parthian general, fighting in the usual desultory way of that nation, kept his harrassed soldiers in a perpetual state of exertion and alarm; and, after wearying them out with marches of excessive length through mountainous and barren districts, would often fall upon them in this exhausted state, and make the most dreadful slaughter of them. At length, under colour of entering into negotiation with him for the termination of the war, he deluded the Syrian king into the fatal error of a personal conference, the

army of the latter being at the same time encamped in such a situation, as rendered them an easy prey to the impetuous assailing enemy. The consequence was, that by this perfidious Parthian manœuvre, Demetrius himself was taken prisoner, and that army entirely dispersed or destroyed.

The unfortunate monarch was sent guarded by a strong division of the victorious army, to the court of Mithridates, who, in this degraded and abject state, carried him with him round the several provinces which had revolted; causing every where to be exposed to the terrified inhabitants, in disgraceful bonds, their expected deliverer of the proud race of the Seleucidæ from the Parthian yoke. After this politic but barbarous triumph, he sent him, with an establishment not unworthy of his high rank, into Hyrcania, whose remote and rugged mountains were thus destined, a second time, to behold a monarch of Syria reluctantly drag through their solitudes the chains of captivity.*

Eucratides, who with a small remnant of the Bactrian army had escaped the general slaughter, now felt the storm which he had been the principal means of exciting, roll back upon himself and his kingdom. On one side Mithridates with an innumerable army, the flower of Parthia, attacked his ill-defended capital; while like ravening vultures, ferocious bands of Scythians, from the neighbourhood of Caucasus and the Jaxartes, successively poured in with irresistable fury upon his northern and eastern frontier. Among the invading Scythians, Strabo particularly mentions the tribes whom he denominates *Pasiani*, *Tochari*, and *Sacæ*.† The Asii of Strabo are doubtless the same as the Asiani of Justin, and in Bayer's opinion, this term is only a corruption of the Persian word *Aksai*, *ob Oxo fluvio*, those who dwelt beyond the Oxus.‡ The Pasiani, or Aspasiacæ, were a tribe inhabiting the region situated still farther northward,

* Justin, lib. xxxviii. cap. 9. Vide etiam Josephi Antiq. lib. xiii. cap. 5. sect. 11.

† Strabonis Geograph. p. 292. edit. Gronovii. ‡ Bayer, p. 97.

between the rivers Oxus and Jaxartes. The Tochari, were situated not remote from them on the latter river, and have given their name to the country at present called Tocharestan, to the east of Balkh. The Sacæ, a powerful and most numerous tribe, dwelt beyond the Jaxartes, and their name was by the ancient Persians indiscriminately applied to the whole race of eastern Scythians. Major Rennel has very well observed on this word, that its frequent recurrence, as a *radical* in the names of so many countries of Asia, not only proves them to have been a great nation, but demonstrates the extent of their conquests and the variety of their establishments.* This inundation of barbarians rolling on, like the tempestuous billows of their native Caspian, one black wave over another, drove the Greeks before them, into the southern and western districts of the empire, where they fell into the jaws of the merciless Parthians, and were successively exterminated. Eucratides himself, in a fruitless endeavour to rally his fugitive subjects, and make one bold stand to save his expiring kingdom, was cut to pieces at the head of them, and perished in the mighty ruins.

Mithridates eagerly embraced the opportunity which now occurred, of gratifying his ambition to the height, and seizing, not only the fairest and richest portion of the Bactrian empire, but all the extensive Indian domains of the fallen monarch on this side, and even beyond, the Ganges; and it is highly probable, that they continued in subjection to the power of this mighty sovereign till his decease. But soon after that period, the Parthians themselves also had strenuously to contend with swarms of barbarians pouring in upon them from the North, whom they sometimes repelled, and to whom they were at others compelled to submit. A foe too, still more daring and formidable in the disciplined Romans, was gradually advancing upon their western frontier, with whom they were engaged for a long series of years in the most hard-fought and

* Rennel's Geography of Herodotus, p. 221.

bloody contests ever beheld in Asia. The issue of these was alternately marked by disaster and by triumph. The Parthian triumphs over the Romans, however, were of no lasting value or importance; for, if at Carrhæ, under a misguided and precipitate leader, victory for once utterly deserted the Roman eagles, the foul disgrace was afterwards severely revenged by Ventidius, the general of Antony; it was amply repaired by the bloodless triumph of Augustus, in the recovery of the ravished standards, the terror of whose name in this instance, accomplished more than embattled legions; and, finally obliterated, by the exterminating sword of Trajan.

The account of the catastrophe of this mighty empire, as above presented to the reader, from Strabo and other classical writers, is in a remarkable manner, confirmed by the Chinese historians of the period, who relate, that about one hundred and twenty-six years before Christ, an immense migration of Tartar hordes from the overflowing regions bordering on China, took place towards the western and southern regions of Asia.* As this migration of Scythians, or Tartars, as we should rather denominate them, continued constantly to increase, and proved eventually productive of the most important consequences to the whole of Southern Asia, giving a race of new lords to its thrones, and new codes of laws to its inhabitants, it will be necessary minutely to investigate the remote cause of the inrush of such an inundation of barbarians into its fertile bosom; and on this task I shall chearfully enter, after a few concluding reflections naturally resulting from the subject that has so long engaged our consideration.

Thus, we see, rapidly rose, and as rapidly became extinct, the Greek empire of Bactria, after it had flourished, under various sovereigns, with as various fortune, during a period of nearly a century and an half; that is to say, from the year before Christ 255, when it was first founded by Theodotus, to the year 126 previous to the

* See M. De Guigne's in Les Memoires de Literat. Tom. XXV. p. 17.

commencement of that æra. If ever we should be in possession, which is a circumstance extremely doubtful, of any more particular details than have at present appeared in Asia or Europe, of the domestic history of India, and the reigns of her native princes during that period, much light must undoubtedly be reflected from it upon the obscure æra which my humble efforts, aided by M. Bayer, have attempted to illumine. If the accounts above presented to the reader, from classical authority, be true, India, to the west of Ganges, could never have been wholly free from Bactrian or Parthian controul, and under the more daring princes of those dynasties, who penetrated beyond Ganges, all India must have been shaken to its very centre. By the striking parallel particulars, which the laborious industry of our countrymen in that region have recently discovered, in the history of Chandragupta, and the Greek Sandracottus, the truth of the classical accounts of India is highly corroborated, and a due degree of credit ought, therefore, to be given to those accounts, though not yet authenticated by similar discoveries. Most cordially do I agree with a truly respectable writer of the present age, that, as our first genuine knowledge of India came to us from the Greeks, to Grecian historians we must still refer for authentic information, in respect to those periods and events at least, the records of which have not yet been presented to us from a genuine source.* The splendid feats of deities enrolled in their romantic mythology seem to have engrossed the recording pen of the brahmins; and, if they ever engaged in historical details, it was with a view to blazon the exploits of their heroes, and advance the glory of their race. Such were those of Sandracottus, triumphant over the expelled Macedonians; but, let it be remembered, that few people are forward to record their own defeats, and perpetuate the national disgrace.

* Dr. Vincent, Periplus, p. 9.

A SUCCINCT HISTORY OF THE PRINCIPAL TRIBES INHABITING GRAND TARTARY, AS WELL FROM CLASSICAL AS NATIVE AUTHORS.

In a former volume of this history * some account has been given of preceding irruptions into the more southern regions of Asia, by the ancient Scythian, or, to use a more modern term, Tartar tribes, inhabiting the vast but little explored, regions extending between what at present constitute the domains of the Czar of Muscovy on the one hand, and those of the emperor of China on the other. That of Oghuz Khan, as recorded by Abulghazi, the Tartar historian, in particular, claimed our attention, because it appears to have been the first invasion of the Indian provinces by the people of that nation, and though attended by no permanent establishment of a Tartar sovereignty in India, yet it well accounts for that considerable mixture of Tartarian manners and customs which diligent observers have not failed to trace in the former country, especially among the war tribes.† The other great irruptions into Southern Asia, of this barbarous race in the time of Cyaxares, the plunder of its finest provinces, and the massacre and expulsion of them after a desolating reign of twenty-eight years, was likewise as particularly noticed, on account of the dispersion of great bodies of them, after their expulsion from Media over all the adjacent regions; and I then took occasion to observe, that, although we have no express authority, from Sanscreet writers, for affirming that any considerable portion of this routed army settled in the Indian provinces, yet, from what we know of a race of Nomades, actually called *Nomurdy*, who at this time inhabit many of the western banks of the Indus, and travel after the old Scythian method, in their wooden houses, from place

* Vol. II. chap. vi. p. 217.

† See Abulghazi Bahadur's Geographical History of the Tatars (Tartars), Vol. I. page 18.

to place, as pasturage is more or less abundant; as we know the whole tract in question was anciently denominated Indo-Scythia; and as the Massagetæ, who inhabited the more northern districts adjoining India, not only ranked among the noblest tribes of the Scythians, but are known to be the ancestors of the Getes, a formidable race of robbers, situated, when Timur invaded India, in the very heart of that country, and from whom the modern Jauts are sprung; from all these circumstances combined, we must be convinced that India, in its western frontier, at least, if not in its internal domain, severely felt the shock of this repulse of the Scythians. That violent contests had long subsisted between the Indians and the Huns, the most savage of the Scythian tribes, who were originally inhabitants of Asiatic Sarmatia, is farther evident from an inscription, in the most ancient Sanscreet dialect, found on a pillar near Buddal, translated by Mr. Wilkins;* and to which that gentleman could not assign a date less early than that engraved on the copper-plate found at Mongueer, which was twenty-three years before Christ; an inscription in which, among the exploits of the mighty monarch to whom it was erected, and whose kingdom is said to have extended from the Cow's Mouth to Ceylone, are particularly mentioned the defeat and humiliation of that ferocious tribe. The passage is here given verbatim, together with the explanatory notes of the translator:

"Trusting to his wisdom, the king of Gowr† for a long time enjoyed the country of the eradicated race of Ootkal,‡ of the HUNS || OF HUMBLED PRIDE, of the kings of Draveer § and Goorjar ¶, whose glory was reduced, and the universal sea-girt throne."

* Asiatic Researches, Vol. I. p. 136.

† The kingdom of Gowr anciently included all the countries which now form the kingdom of Bengal on this side the Brahampootra, except Mongueer.

‡ Orixa. || Huns. § A country to the south of the Carnatic. ¶ Guzzurat.

These previous successful irruptions into provinces so much more beautiful and fertile than their own sandy desarts, were doubtless one cause of animating barbarians, at all times ardently bent on plunder, to renew their atrocities in civilized Asia. The discipline, however, and determined valour of the armed Greeks who guarded the frontiers of Bactria, had hitherto constantly prevailed in repelling their reiterated assaults; but the invasion of it by the Parthians, and the subsequent death of Eucratides, laid the centre of that empire open to their predatory incursions; and previous to this period, a circumstance had occurred on the distant frontier of their empire, towards China, which contributed to swell the numbers of the invaders, and render them a phalanx equally terrible from their strength, and irresistible from their numbers. I must, therefore, request the company of the reader on a short excursion towards regions and nations rather remote from the immediate field of Indian history, but whose influence upon the present and future transactions carried on in that field, proved by no means of a transient or unimportant nature.

The immense plains of Asiatic Tartary, if we may use a term comparatively modern, seem, from the remotest ages, to have been tenanted as at the present day, by innumerable tribes of a race devoted to pasturage and the chase, and from frequent conflicts as well between themselves, as with their neighbours on the south and west, inured to arms. By ancient classical authors, they are divided into eight great nations, of which the principal were the tribe specifically called by Herodotus, the Royal Tribe,* whom he places on the banks of the Tanais, which river divided them from Asiatic Sarmatia, the original country of the savage Huns; the tribe properly called Scythian Nomades, adjoining to the former, and inhabitants of the north-western district of the Caspian Sea; the Alani Scythæ, situated north of Mount Caucasus; the Massagetæ,

* Herodotus, lib. iv. cap. 56.

already mentioned, extending from the north-eastern shores of the Caspian, almost to the frontiers of India; the sanguinary race who sacrificed to Diana, the miserable victims ship-wrecked on their inhospitable coast, and inhabited the Tauric Khersonese and the present Crim Tartary; the Budini, who regaled on the horrid banquet of human blood, were also of Sarmatian origin. These were the ancestors of the still more numerous tribes of Tartars of modern times, which, according to the history of that people above alluded to, are divided into three great branches, and subdivided into an almost infinite variety of smaller ones. These three branches consist of, 1. the Tartars, properly so called, who inhabit the regions of Asia situated to the north-west of the Caspian Sea; 2. the Calmucks, who possess the whole middle districts of the Northern Asia; 3. the Monguls, or as we call them, Moguls, whose empire extends over its eastern confines, and is bounded by the great Oriental Ocean. Of the one or the other of these, the Uzbeck, the Nogai, the Zagatai, the Kipzak or Cossack, the Manchew, and other inferior tribes are only subordinate branches.*

In this geographical sketch, the vast region of Turkestan, which anciently gave its name to the nations of the Northern Asia before the Turkmans were expelled by the Tartar tribes under Zengis Khan, should be mentioned as the proper Turan of the Persian historians, a name which will so frequently occur in the future pages of this history, and supposed to be derived from Tur, the son of Feridan, one of the earliest of the ancient Pishdadian dynasty of kings, as that of Turkestan itself is from Turk, whom the vanity of Mohammedan writers exalts as the eldest son of Japhet, and celebrates as the founder of that ancient nation. Undoubtedly, both from tradition and history, sacred and profane, it is evident that this immense region of the earth was first peopled by the Japhetic tribes; and whether we believe or not, all the romantic relations of

* Abulghazi Bahadur's Hist. Tartars, Vol. II. p. 389.

Arabian fablers concerning their fancied Yajuj and Majuj, our Gog and Magog, yet as the latter name is recorded in Scripture as belonging to the second son of Japhet, we may with safety, I think, agree with those writers who deduce the appellation of Mogul from Mogli, or Magogli, the sons of Magog.

With respect to the term Tatar, corruptly by us called Tartar, but so generally adopted at this day, that it would appear like affectation in an historian not to adopt the latter mode of writing it, the royal author himself, derives this general name of his nation from Tatar Khan, sixth in descent from Japhet, and the twin brother of Mogul, between whom, says the history, the whole northern region of Asia was anciently divided. The perpetual contests of their descendants for its sole sovereignty, swell the fabulous volume of the early history of both nations; and, among other incredible tales, it is related, that in a general battle which took place between them, the whole race of Moguls, except two families of the royal line, were utterly cut off, and these for security, retiring into a deep but delicious valley, on every side inclosed by vast mountains, accessible only by one steep narrow path, there dwelt secluded from the other nations of Asia, for the space of four hundred years. During their stay in this terrestrial paradise, for such it is described to have been,* their numbers, by intermarriages, are said to have so prodigiously increased, that fertile and extensive as was the *happy valley*, it no longer produced sufficient aliment for their support. Yet all egress from it seemed to be barred by the almost insuperable height of the mountains of Irgana Khan, for by that name they distinguished their retreat; Irgana, in the Mogul language, signifying a valley, and Khan a precipice, and it was only by one of those stupendous efforts sometimes to be found in the pages of romance, that they finally effected their liberation. Of the narrow path by which the two original families had entered the valley, owing to the

* Hist. Tart. Vol. I. p. 27.

growth of woods and other causes, no trace was now to be found; while precipices frightfully piled upon each other, whose summits were lost in the clouds, menaced them with eternal incarceration, aggravated by all the horrors of approaching famine. It occurred, at length, to one who followed the occupation of a farrier, that in one place the mountain appeared less steep and thick than in others, and that it consisted entirely of iron ore. He proposed, therefore, to dissolve that part of it by means of fire, and thus to force an opening through its sides, large enough for themselves and their cattle to emigrate. The proposal was listened to with exultation. Every individual chearfully loaded himself with wood and charcoal, which was deposited at the foot of the mountain, one stratum of wood on another of coal to a great height, and to this mass of fuel set on flame was applied, records the legend, the powerful operation of seventy leathern bellows. The intended effect was, after some time, produced; the molten ore rushed down in torrents; and a road was excavated large enough for the passage of a loaded camel. By this road they all joyfully effected their escape; and in memory of this their miraculous deliverance, the Moguls to this day are said to celebrate an anniversary festival attended with the following solemnity: an immense fire is kindled, into which a piece of iron of proportionable magnitude is thrown, and, when red hot, is first struck with a hammer by the Grand Khan, next by all the other Khans in succession, and finally, by all the individuals of the assembly. Abulghazi asserts that this festival continues to be observed through the whole extent of the empire of the Moguls, and some great national deliverance may well be supposed to be thus commemorated, though the fact be, as usual, blended with Oriental fabling.*

Having thus liberated themselves from the iron mountain, the Moguls immediately went in pursuit of their old determined foes of the Tartar nation, whom, though far superior in number, they

* Hist. of the Tartars, Vol. I. p. 28.

utterly defeated in a general engagement, sacrificing both the young and the aged to their implacable revenge. The powerful ascendancy gained by this victory, the former kept for a series of ages, till the reign of Jenghis Khan, who restored the glory of the Tartar name, and indeed, carried it to such a height, that the name of Mogul was absorbed in it, and, under the denomination of Tartary, are comprehended both the nations and the country of the whole northern continent. With this corrupted name too, the Greeks and Romans were well acquainted, since they applied it to describe the region of darkness and horror, situated at the extremity of the earth, and beyond civilized nature, conceiving of it ideas nearly similar to what we now entertain of Siberia, which in fact forms no inconsiderable portion of it.

The Mogul tribes, it has been already observed, were principally dispersed over the eastern extremity of Northern Asia, confining on the vast empire of the Chinese, whom some writers, particularly M. de Pauw, have supposed originally to have been of Tartar extraction, and to have descended at some remote period in wild clans, from the steeps of Imaus into the fertile plains of that more genial region of Asia. In support of their argument, they refer us to the apparent similitude between the two nations in point of feature and other striking circumstances; their *thin beards*, *small eyes*, and *flat noses*. Whether this hypothesis, or that of the late Sir William Jones, who asserts the Chinese to be an ancient race of emigrated Indians, be more just, is not the subject of our present inquiry; and indeed, while the early history of a nation is involved in such profound obscurity as that of China, either from the defect of regular records, or the mixture with those records of absurd legends, every inquiry must terminate in uncertainty. One fact, however, is certain, that the ferocious and predatory Moguls were for ever making inroads upon their quiet and civilized neighbours, and that with a view to repel their reiterated attacks, the emperor SHI-WHANG-TI,

one of the most renowned and powerful that ever filled the throne, and second sovereign of the fourth dynasty, called TSING, caused to be erected by the united labour of a mighty nation, according to the history of Martinius, in the year 215 before Christ,* but by Du Halde and others, referred to a far more ancient date, that vast rampart, the most stupendous work of its kind in the world, carried over the loftiest mountains, by means of immense arches across the broadest rivers, along the ridges of the most rugged precipices, and through the deepest vallies, for an extent of fifteen hundred miles, that is, from the ocean that washes the province of Pe-chi-lee on the east, to the extremities of that of Shensi on the west. In the bed of that ocean, and close adjoining to the shore, the emperor ordered several ships loaded with iron to be sunk, to form a firm foundation for the massy pile of masonry to be erected upon it; and one-third of all the males of adult age throughout the empire, were summoned to assist in the construction of this formidable barrier. The rampart itself, for its common appellation of a *wall* is too degrading a term for a work of such prodigious labour and extent, is of the height of from twenty to twenty-five feet, and of sufficient breadth for six horsemen to ride abreast upon; it was fortified with three thousand towers, and during the period of the glory of the ancient Chinese emperors, was guarded by not less than a million of soldiers.† The mind contemplates with amazement, a work of this nature, which proves at once the high advance in mechanic science of the people, who raised it two thousand years ago with such architectural skill, that at this day it remains entire, while it evinces the despotic power of the prince, who thus compelled a whole nation to labour in the construction of

* Martinii Hist. Sin. p. 239; and Du Halde's China, Vol. II. p. 172.

† Travels of Ysbrant Ides from Moscow to China, p. 61. A very accurate description of the dimensions and other particulars of this fortification, may be perused in Lord Macartney's Embassy to China, Vol. II. p. 190.

it. In respect, indeed, to the despotism of Shi-whang-ti, that point is otherwise sufficiently attested, for he is reported in the Chinese annals, to have been the savage Omar of that country, by whose command, uttered in the phrenzy of wild ambition to become himself the sole object of future admiration, all the books of science of every kind throughout the empire, and the history of all the emperor's reigns preceding his own were burned, and the learned men who attempted to protect any of those sacred treasures of ancient glory, from the devouring flame, were cruelly massacred.*

This fortification was abundantly sufficient to repel invaders, armed principally with the sabre, and bows and arrows; and by this means the peace of the empire seems to have been inviolably secured for above seventy years, till the reign of the powerful prince Vu-ti, fifth emperor of the respectable dynasty of Han, who is recorded to have gained over the Tartars four great and successive victories, to have pursued their flying bands far into the Southern Asia, and to have subjected Pegu, Siam, Kambaya, and even Bengal to his controul. Omnium primo, says Martinius, Tartaros subegit ac domuit, eorumque terras ingressus omnia longe lateque vastavit. Sinico etiam imperio vicinam Indiam, eam præcipue quæ ad Libycum vergit, a Gange clausam, ad Bengalam usque regnum occupavit.† The vigorous repulse received from this prince by the Mogul Tartars, who were established in the regions nearest to the great rampart, obliging them to fall back on their western and southern neighbours through the whole extent of that division of the higher Asia, proved the cause of bringing down upon the terrified inhabitants the inexhaustible swarms of the great Scythian hive; a scourge under which they long groaned, and valiantly, but ineffectually, struggled to avert. Other splendid victories over the Moguls are also recorded by the Chinese historians whom Martini quotes, and,

* Du Halde, Vol. I. p. 172. † Martinii Hist. Sin. p. 345, and Du Halde, Vol. II. p. 177.

consequently, there being no passage eastward for their overflowing legions, by degrees those terrible marauders became possessed of the finest provinces of Southern Asia, driving continually before them, or subjecting to their fierce controul, the nations situated nearer to the Indian and Mediterranean seas. The unoffending race of Hindoos were among the earliest victims of their savage ferocity. The Persians were next compelled to submit to their galling and degrading yoke. The genius of declining Rome reluctantly bowed its head beneath the reiterated assaults of their Vandal brethren. The sanguinary chieftains of Arabia, who propagated with the sword through Asia, the doctrine of their master, found in these northern warriors, a race equally delighting in blood. At length the Tartars themselves having embraced the Mahommedan faith, and zealously fighting in its cause, were beheld with astonishment passing the distant limits of Asia; and planting their standards on the ramparts of Byzantium, and the palaces of Alexandria.

CHAPTER VI.

The Parthian and Syrian History, as connected with that of India, resumed and concluded.—The Parthian Empire being harrassed and almost overwhelmed, by repeated Irruptions of the barbarous Scythians, Pachorus, its Sovereign, applies to the Romans for Succour, which proves the Means of introducing the Armies of that Nation into the more eastern Districts of Asia, and to an Acquaintance with India.—Antiochus Asiaticus dethroned by Pompey, and Syria finally added to the Number of the Roman Provinces.—An Embassy dispatched by Porus, King of Western India, to solicit the Friendship of AUGUSTUS, *and an Alliance with the Romans.—*ZARMANOCHAGAS *burns himself at Athens.—Observations on the above Embassy, and that of* PANDION *to the same Prince.—Account of the Voyage of* IAMBULUS *to the Southern Coast of India.—The Visit paid by* APOLLONIUS TYANÆUS *to Phraotes, a Prince of Western India.—Of the Embassy sent to* CLAUDIUS *by a Sovereign of Ceylone.—Of the Roman Commerce carried on with India, as stated by Pliny and the Author of the Periplus, and of various Embassies sent at different Times to Trajan and other succeeding Roman Emperors.—The Travels into India of* COSMAS INDICOPLEUSTES.—*The internal State of India at the Period of the Commencement of the* MAHOMMEDAN ÆRA.

THE great military talents, and the numerous and disciplined armies kept up by Mithridates, seem not only to have preserved, during his life, his own Parthian dominions, but also his immediate Indian conquests secure from the usurpation of the invading Scythians; but that monarch's decease, which took place after a reign

of thirty-seven years marked by felicity and glory, afforded too favourable an opportunity to those northern freebooters for the wider extension of their ravages, to be neglected. They were not precipitate, but waited for a favourable moment. Mithridates was succeeded by his son Phrahates, the second of that name, who soon after his ascending the throne, was attacked by an immense army raised by Antiochus Sidetes, the reigning prince of Syria, for the purpose of liberating his brother Demetrius Nicator, still a captive in the Parthian dominions. The event was, that Phrahates was defeated in no less than three great battles; the fairest portion of his father's extensive conquests was wrested from him; and he himself disgracefully driven back within the contracted limits of the Parthian kingdom, when first erected into an independent sovereignty. By a rapid reverse of fortune, however, owing to the intolerable insolence and oppression of the victorious Syrians while dispersed in winter quarters throughout that region of Asia, Sidetes and the whole army were risen upon by the enraged inhabitants, and being from their prodigious numbers obliged to be quartered in divisions, separated by so great a distance from each other, as to be unable, on any sudden emergency, to rally in one collective body to defend themselves against the assailants, were all in one day, without distinction, massacred.* Their melancholy catastrophe filled every province of Syria with tears and lamentations, there being few families that were not deprived, by this tragedy, of a son or a brother. Demetrius, in the mean time, had effected his escape from confinement, and resumed the crown worn, during the period of his captivity, by his slaughtered brother; but, in resuming that crown, he resumed none of the glories of the first Nicator; the future years of his reign exhibiting only a series of disgraceful defeats, and he perished miserably by assassination at Tyre, in the year 124 before Christ.

* Justin, lib. xxxviii. cap. 10, Josephi Antiquit. lib. xiii. cap. 16.

It happened that Phrahates, driven almost to despair by defeat in three general engagements, had himself, previously to the massacre of the Syrian prince and army, been under the necessity of applying to the Scythians situated nearest his kingdom, for their assistance against the invaders. Anxious, or rather impatient, to be employed in scenes of blood and spoliation, innumerable legions soon assembled on his frontiers; but the work of death having been effected by his own Parthians, in combination with the irritated inhabitants of the newly conquered provinces, that assistance became unnecessary, and the imprudent king refused to gratify their demands of retribution for services, for which they were engaged, but which were never performed. Incensed at his refusal, their savage bands poured down upon his territories, and committed in them every species of outrage and devastation. To repel their barbarous aggression, Phrahates enlisted under his banner all the dispersed Greeks who were either exiles from Bactria, or languished in captivity under Parthian oppression in the adjoining provinces. These brave, but unfortunate people, smarting with recent wrongs, as soon as they had obtained arms, went over in a body to the Scythians, joined in the general pillage, put the Parthians every where to death without mercy, and finally, sacrificing to their vengeance the weak prince who had embodied them, marched off, like the Scythians, to their respective countries, loaded with the plunder of ravaged Asia. Not long after the first army of Scythians had retreated, a second hurried thither, to glean the remaining spoil. These Scythians, who are expressly said by Justin to be of the nation of Thogarians, (that is, Scythians of Tocharestan, mentioned above) completed the work of desolation, having slain in a bloody battle the new monarch, Artabanus, uncle to the last.* These irruptions inflicted a terrible blow on the Parthian empire, and possibly proved the occasion of Pacorus the First, the succeeding monarch, sending to Sylla, then in Asia, a

* Justin, lib. xlii. cap. 1.

splendid embassy, and, through his means, soliciting the friendship and alliance of the Roman people, of the renown of whose name, and of the valour of whose arms, the Parthians about this time first began to be informed. Sylla, who was at that time only prætor, felt his vanity highly gratified, in being the first Roman to whom so potent a sovereign as the Parthian monarch should apply, to be admitted to an alliance with his nation, and received the embassy in Cappadocia, the distracted affairs of which province he was settling, with all the pomp and magnificence becoming the dignity of the Roman people. It would have been fortunate, perhaps, for both nations, if this embassy had never been sent or received, since the annals of no ancient nation whatever, record such a long and dreadful series of obstinate and sanguinary conflicts, as, at a future period, took place between Rome and Parthia, from the fatal day of Carrhæ, when one of the finest and most gallant armies that ever left Rome, was almost annihilated by the arrows of the Parthians, till the subjugation of that nation, and their being made tributary to Rome, by the valour of the emperor Trajan; or, to speak more properly, since their fierce and indomitable spirit led them in a few years to burst that yoke asunder, till the final subversion of the dynasty of the Arsacidæ by that of Sassan, about 200 years after Christ. With the Parthian history of that period, however, so deeply connected with the Roman, that of India has but little concern, and the events of it are only glanced at here, on account of the splendour of the Roman name, having, by means of those conflicts, first come to the knowledge of the Indians, who are said in consequence, to have sent an embassy to Augustus, the circumstances of which we shall presently consider.

With the remaining sovereigns also of the dynasty of the Seleucidæ, from the time of Demetrius, to the period in which Antiochus Asiaticus, the last of the turbulent family of Seleucus was dethroned, and Syria added to the number of the Roman provinces, by Pompey,

in the year before Christ 65, this history has as little connection. Both these princes, and the descendants of Ptolemy Lagus, who latterly reigned in Egypt, had their courts at too great a distance, and were besides, too much engaged in defending their invaded dominions against the Romans to allow of their interruption of the repose of India from those quarters. True, indeed, even under barbarous foreign controul, the inhabitants dwelling on the two shores of the Indus, and at the mouths of that river, by the permission of their Indo-Scythian conquerors, and probably by the payment of exorbitant duties, seem to have carried on with the Egyptians a considerable traffic, which in some degree kept up an intercourse between the two nations; but still it was merely a commercial intercourse, precarious in its issue, and unprotected from the rapacious grasp of a race who, engaged in a Nomadic life, were regardless of commerce, and utter strangers to navigation. The resident Greeks, who had fled from Bactria into the cities of the Peninsula where they were secure from Tartar depredation, with vigour, and to greater extent, from the numerous emporia of Malabar, continued to trade with their brethren at Alexandria, for to the Alexandrian Greeks alone was that trade confined; the native Egyptians, to the last degree luxurious and indolent, being content to adorn themselves by the naval toil of their victors, with the gorgeous silks and the costly gems of India. The conquest of Egypt by Augustus, was the occasion of no obstruction to this flourishing commerce, that had been so vigorously carried on between the Indians and Egyptians, from the time of the great Philadelphus. On the contrary, it gave an increased impulse to its expanding sail, and opened in imperial Rome, a new and vast emporium for the reception of the richest commodities of both countries. I have already presented the reader, by anticipation, from Strabo and Pliny, with an account of the commencement and gradual progress of this trade, an account sufficiently extended for a work of this general nature; and the author

of the Periplus of the Erythræan Sea, will enable me to give with due exactness, in its proper place, the promised catalogue of the costly articles of both import and export mutually afforded by that commerce. Our more immediate concern is with the embassy sent by Porus to Augustus, a few years preceding the commencement of the Christian æra.

It is remarkable that Suetonius, in the life of that prince, speaking of this event, mentions, in the same sentence, the Scythians together with the Indians, as sending ambassadors to him, and soliciting his friendship.* The coupling of their names thus closely, seems to prove, that the predominant influence of the former over the latter subsisted even so late as the time of Augustus; and that Porus, however powerful in his own territory, was still in some degree a feudatory of that nation. Indeed, when the Scythians invaded Bactria, it can scarcely be doubted, but that they made themselves masters of all the dependencies of that empire adjoining to the Indus; if not immediately, at least after the death of the great Parthian monarch who assisted them in the subjugation of it. Whether this conjecture be true or not, the sovereign at that time reigning over the country conquered by Alexander, and whose kings, it would seem, according to the custom of Asiatic dynasties, had the name of Porus in common among them, in order to conciliate Augustus, then in Syria, settling the affairs of the Parthian empire, dispatched to that prince a numerous and splendid embassy, bearing some of the rarest productions of India, and charged with letters written upon vellum, in the Greek character, a circumstance highly deserving notice, as it strongly marks the prevalence in the Indian courts of the Grecian manners and language, three hundred years after Alexander's invasion. These letters contained an ostentatious display of the great power, wealth, and magnificence of the monarch who sent them; he informed Augustus, that he had under his controul six hundred

* Suetonius, in Octav. p. 68. edit. Bipont, 1783.

tributary princes, or rajahs; which might be true, as we cannot tell how far in the interior of India his empire extended; that the renown of the Roman victories had reached his distant realm; that he admired the valour, and respected the talents, of Augustus; that he desired nothing more fervently, than the alliance of such a nation, and the friendship of such a prince; and that they might command at all times, the zealous services both of himself and the people subject to him.* Of the ambassadors, all but three perished by the way, owing to the tedious length of the journey, and the fatigues sustained in the course of it. Those three, as well as the presents they brought with them, were seen, as Strabo informs us, by Nicolas of Damascus, at Antioch, in their way to Samos, whither Augustus had sailed; and the latter are described by the same writer, to have been borne by eight slaves so thinly clothed in the light dress of the country, as to appear almost naked, but highly perfumed, after the Indian manner, with the richest aromatic unguents. The presents consisted of tygers, to which animal, till that time, the Romans were strangers; birds of monstrous growth, and reptiles of a prodigious magnitude;† presents which, it has been judiciously observed, seemed rather calculated to deter from invasion, than to unite distant nations in the bonds of friendship.

In the train of the ambassadors was a venerable Brachman, an aged Sarman, as his name demonstrates, and as he is in fact called by Dion Cassius,‡ who was so flattered and delighted with the attention paid him by Augustus, that he followed the emperor to Athens, and either in ostentatious imitation of the conduct of Calanus, who followed Alexander into Persia, as far as Pasargadæ, and burned himself before the whole assembled army of the astonished Greeks; or else, in jealous emulation of his enthusiastic heroism, there committed his body to the flames, consigning his æthereal portion to the immortal gods!

* Strabo, lib. xv. p. 663. † Ibid. ‡ Dion Cassius, lib. liii. p. 527.

As, by strictly confining myself in the account of Alexander's expedition into India to mere historical detail, I neglected to state the circumstance of that philosopher's devoting himself a voluntary victim to the fire, yet as in a work of this kind, an occurrence so public and memorable, should not be wholly unnoticed, I here present it to the reader, as I find it related by Arrian.

Calanus was one of a body of penitents whom that prince saw and conversed with at Taxila, which has before been described as the modern Attock, situated on a branch of the Indus, to which it gives its name, and the only one whom he could prevail with to accompany his army back to Persia.* The Greeks applied the term Brachman indiscriminately to the priest who officiated in the Indian temples, and the yogee who wandered without clothes or food in the solitudes of the desart. It is difficult, however, to conceive Calanus to have been a Brahmin, as, in that case, he would scarcely have left a country, of which every spot, to the Brahmins, is consecrated ground; or have crossed a frontier river, whose very name signifies *forbidden*, i. e. to be passed by the natives of India. Soon after his arrival in Persia, being disordered with a flux, he resolutely refused the proffered assistance and prescribed regimen of a foreign race of physicians, and solicited Alexander, that a funeral pile, for the purpose of burning himself, might be erected; which that prince at first strenuously refused; but, finding him inflexible, he at length gave orders for the deathful solemnity; when every thing was prepared after a manner becoming the grandeur of so great a monarch. The funeral scaffold was built of the richest woods; cedar, cypress, and myrtle: the most costly gums and aromatics were scattered over it; and it was adorned with rich vestments and vessels of gold and silver. A litter decorated with garlands after the Indian fashion, bore to that pile the venerable sage, who all the way sang hymns of exultation and triumph in the dialect of his country. Arrived at the

* Arrian, lib. vii. p. 276, edit. Gronovii.

pile, he ordered the costly furniture of all kinds, and the golden and silver vases with which it was adorned, to be taken away and distributed among his disciples and attendants; after which he ascended the pile, and, laying himself down upon it, was consumed. The instant the pile was fired, according to his own express desire to have his funeral considered as a festival, the trumpets were sounded, and the whole army gave a shout, as in the moment of victory, being filled with equal admiration and astonishment at the sight of a man consuming to ashes without any perceptible motion; so powerful, says Arrian, are the force of habit and the effect of education.*

Zarmanochagas, however, far exceeded Calanus in the value and merit of his sacrifice, if, indeed, there could be any genuine merit in an act which a nobler system of religion, and a more enlightened philosophy than that of India, has branded with the stigma of a cowardly relinquishment of life, and a base desertion of our post in the hour of apprehended danger; yet still that act, according to their degraded system, was far more heroic in the present, than the more ancient, Sarman, since the former ascended the blazing pile, when, as he boasted to Augustus, he was yet, though somewhat advanced in years, in the perfect possession of all his mental and bodily energies, and added to that blessing, in the full and uninterrupted enjoyment of worldly prosperity, and the latter, when under the pressure of a painful disease, which he conjectured might destroy him. It was, as before observed, at Athens that he set the Grecian philosophers this imagined heroic example of indifference for life, and contempt of its most valued blessings; for, in the presence of all the learned and renowned of that celebrated city, having newly bathed and being anointed with rich unguents, as it were for a gay wedding rather than a funeral, with resolute step and smiling countenance he mounted the funeral pile, and suffered himself to be

* Arrian, lib. vii. p. 277.

gradually consumed, while the Stoics of Greece stood mute and astonished spectators of a scene equally novel and awful. The effect of that astonishment was a monument erected to his memory by the Athenians, which, according to Strabo, who flourished in the reign of Augustus, was the intimate friend of Ælius Gallus, that emperor's confidential governor for Egypt, and probably saw it, was thus inscribed: *The tomb of Zarmanochagas, the Indian, of Bargosa,* (perhaps Barygaza) *who sacrificed himself according to a custom prevailing in his country.**

Were not the Greek and Roman historians of the Augustan period so universal and decided in their assertions, that these ambassadors came from Porus, the sovereign of *Western India*, from the magnificent account contained in the letters written in the Greek character, of the greatness of his power, and the extent of his dominion, I should be inclined to think that those authors had ascribed to an inferior prince, transactions which might with more propriety be assigned to the sovereign of universal India, either to Bickermajit himself, or Salbahan, who about the commencement of the Christian æra, in Deccan, successively swayed the imperial sceptre. If, indeed, the sage Zarmanochagas were, as the inscription on his tomb seems to announce, a native of Barygaza, that circumstance too, would afford additional evidence that he came from a sovereign reigning in or near Dachanabades, as the author of the Periplus renders into Greek the native term Deccan, or the South, on the shore of which it is situated; Tagara, or Deoghir, having been, as we have seen, the occasional capital both of Bickermajit and Salbahan; I say the occasional capital, because the emperors of Hindostan seem in general to have had two capitals, (as for instance, in later times, Delhi and Agra), and the Sanscreet accounts assign to them Ugein in Malwa, the Greek Ozene, built by Bickermajit himself, as the more general residence of those monarchs.

* Strabo, lib. xv. p. 664.

To a considerable portion of the adjoining district, the Greeks gave the appellation of SERIACA, comprehending, as Mr. Wilford has informed us, the greater part of the Subah of Aurungabad, and the southern part of Concan; while the more northern part of it, including Damaun, Callian, Salset, Bombay, and other places on the coast, at that time belonged to the rajah of LARICE.* Under the denomination of LARICE, I believe, was meant to be comprehended Guzzurat in general; the native term LAR being very extensively applied, and, in particular, giving name to the town of Larry-bunder, situated about five or six leagues from the sea, and one of the branches of the Indus.† *Baleocuri-regia*, points out to us the royal residence of the BALHARA, a most potent prince in those parts, and Cambay was the port belonging to his capital. The vast tract, called by the ancient writers LIMYRICA, owned yet another lord, little inferior in splendour and power to the Balhara, whose metropolis of *Carura*, situated at some distance from the sea, is recognised by D'Anville, in the modern city of KAURI. But superior to both, in grandeur and wealth, in this southern division of India, soared the puissant sovereign, named Pandion, whose kingdom extended quite to the southern point of Comaria or Comarin, and who was probably of the ancient race of the renowned *Pandus*. He also is said about this time to have sent an embassy to Augustus, but no particulars of that embassy have descended to us. The residence of this monarch was at the great city of Madura, and the extent of his power is evident from the whole of that district being denominated from him *Pandi-Mandalam*, literally the circle or empire of Pandion. Arrian expressly says,‡ that the Indian Hercules (Crishna), worshipped at Mathura, on the Jobares (Jumna), left many sons, but only one daughter, PANDÆA, to whom he gave a vast army and kingdom, and ordered that the whole of her empire should be called by her

* Asiatic Researches, Vol. I. p. 333. p. 546. Rennell's Memoir, p. 287.

† D'Anville's Ancient Geography,

‡ Arrian in Indicis, cap. viii.

name. In this and a few other instances, do the classical confirm and illustrate the native accounts.

Diodorus, who flourished in the reign of Augustus, has recorded a curious account of a voyage to the shores of India, by a person of the name of Iambulus, an Alexandrian Greek, which may with propriety be noticed here. The whole narration has been observed to have much of the air of a romance; yet still, as with many extravagant facts in this relation, are blended others apparently founded in truth and just observation, and as it for the first time, in regular history, (for the exploits of Rama in Ceylone have been already detailed at large,) introduces to the reader the celebrated island of TAPROBANA, or Ceylone, I shall insert an abridgement of it in these pages, and subjoin a few remarks on that noble appendage to the Indian continent, which, in ancient Sanscreet books, is sometimes designated by the very resembling appellation of TAPOBANA, or *the Wilderness of Prayer*, being a place frequented by Hindoo penitents, and is sometimes denominated DEVA LANCA, or *the sacred Lanca.**

According to Diodorus, Iambulus was the son of a merchant who traded to Arabia for spices, and himself having engaged in the same species of commerce, in one of his voyages to that country, was, together with another, taken prisoner by a band of robbers of that nation, but afterwards they were seized upon and conveyed away by certain Æthiopians who frequented that coast, to serve as a kind of victims at a solemn national festival holden in Æthiopia once in thirty years, in which it was a custom of a very ancient date to expose upon the ocean two strangers, set adrift in a small vessel, to the mercy of the winds and tides, as an expiation for the sins of the assembled people. The custom is not a little singular, and fully evinces what has often before been contended for in these volumes, viz. the general prevalence throughout the Asiatic world, derived from a patriarchal source, of the necessity of an expiatory sacrifice for delinquent man.

* Mr. Chambers in Asiatic Researches, Vol. I. p. 110.

At present, however, the historical fact must alone engage our attention, and therefore it is merely necessary to state, that decorated with garlands, and supplied with abundant provisions for a voyage of six months, at the appointed time, they and their slender bark were committed, without remorse, to the perilous ocean. As the return of the victims thus exposed, was always looked upon as a malignant omen, Iambulus and his devoted comrade, were enjoined to use every effort to pursue their voyage in a southern direction, towards a certain island, which was known to the Æthopians only by vague report, but said to be inhabited by a race celebrated for benevolence and hospitality.*

After combating, for four months, with the elements, they were carried by the strong periodical winds which prevail in those seas, and are now so well known to Europeans, by the name of the *monsoon*, to the island in question, which Diodorus states to be in form almost round, and to be in compass, about five thousand stadia, or five hundred of our miles. In fact, however, that form is oblong, and its dimensions, according to more accurate modern calculations are found to be 280 miles in length, and about 150 in breadth. They were joyfully and hospitably received by the inhabitants, of whom and their customs, a most singular and extravagant description is given, and into which it is unnecessary that I should minutely enter, since from what we now know of the Ceylonese, whose manners are not likely to have materially varied, and are evidently like themselves, of Indian original, the greater part of it is evidently a fable, though grafted on historical fact: what is most worthy of notice, as most agreeable to known truth, in the narration, is the division of the natives into separate tribes, each living under the jurisdiction of its own chief; their extraordinary stature and flexibility of limbs, which is confirmed by modern observation; their adoration of the sun, moon, and heavenly host, and their consequent

* Diod. Sic. lib. ii. p. 138. edit. Rhodoman.

devotion to astrological inquiries; their vestments formed of the cotton tree, and dyed of a purple colour; the luxuriant fertility of the country in producing vines, olives, and especially calamus or maize, in the greatest abundance, of which they made an excellent sort of bread; the equatorial situation of the island, and consequently their enjoying days and nights of equal length; their having a number of wives in common, in this respect resembling the Nayres on the neighbouring coast of Malabar; the number and magnitude of the serpents produced in the island; and, finally, their exposing their dead on the shore, and the voluntary death to which, like Calanus and Zarmanochagas, the old and the infirm frequently devoted themselves. It must strike with astonishment, every person acquainted with the natural history of Ceylone, that a merchant, and a trader too in spices, should not, after a seven years residence on the island, have noticed among its valuable productions, the cinnamon, which has constituted, in every age, its principal object of commerce with the nations of the east; and this circumstance, as Dr. Vincent has well observed, tends more than any other to involve in doubt the reality of the whole adventure.*

In respect to what is related of the tongues of the natives, by nature divided, and said to be farther cut by art in their infancy, to the very root, by which means they were enabled to converse with two persons at once, and imitate the notes of the feathered tribe; the great birds upon whose wings their children were accustomed to fly into the air, and other similar prodigies, they must be considered as the usual embellishments of an Eastern tale. Let us attend to the sequel of the adventures of Iambulus, who seems to have been destined to wander, though not always an unpitied exile, round the shores of Afric and Asia.

A residence of seven years on this celebrated island could not, it seems, remove their rooted prejudice in favour of foreign habits and

* Dr. Vincent, Periplus, p. 22.

manners. They refused to comply with the religious and civil usages of the country, and therefore, in the same bark in which they arrived, after it had been refitted and amply stored with provisions for a long voyage, they were compelled to depart. After beating the ocean precisely for as long a period as before, they were wrecked on the shallows of the Indian coast, probably near the mouth of the Ganges. The comrade of Iambulus perished in the boisterous wave; but he himself reaching the shore in safety, was seized and hurried away by the natives, many leagues into the interior of the country, before the reigning sovereign, at Palibothra, by whom he was kindly and liberally treated, as that sovereign was partial to the Greeks and to Greek literature. As a cloud of suspicion hangs over the whole narration, and as no exact date is assigned to the event, it would be useless to inquire who this particular prince (Φιλελλης) so partial to the Greek nation might have been. During the friendly intercourse which we have seen was at intervals carried on between the Syrian monarchs and the Indian sovereigns, a fondness for Greek literature and manners may justly be conjectured to have sprung up in the courts of the princes of India, and if Philostratus may be credited, was actually the case in a very high degree, at the court which was visited by Apollonius Tyanæus, in Western India, on the consideration of which we are presently about to enter. Bickermajit was a warm patron of the sciences and of scientific men; and, flourishing about that period on the throne of India, was probably the compassionate prince who relieved the distresses of our maritime adventurer, and provided him afresh with every necessary to undertake the subsequent and final voyage, first to Persia, and thence to Greece, which he is said, by Diodorus, successfully to have effected.*

The celebrated expedition of Rama to Ceylone, amply detailed in the preceding volume, and recently referred to, has been justly

* Diod. Sic. lib. ii. p. 142. edit. Rhod.

numbered by me, among the ancient legendary tales of the Hindoos; yet there still remain on that island, so many evident vestiges of the conqueror of Ravan and recoverer of Sita, having been there at some very early period, as seem to prove that, in this, as in many other instances, their legends are founded on the firm basis of historical fact. The connecting chain of rocks extending to its northern shore from the continent, at this day called RAMA'S BRIDGE, is one of them; another is found in the very name of the principal city of the island, by Pliny, from the report of the freed man of Annius Plocamus, called Palesimundus, which, in the native dialect, is no other than PARASHRI-MANDALA, the circle or sovereignty of PARASHRI, the Indian Bacchus; a third in the prevailing superstitious rites paid to Bacchus, for the king is positively said by Pliny to have worshipped Bacchus, or Dionysius, a word formed by the Greeks from the Sanscreet DEO-NAHUSHA; and lastly, we find in Ptolemy DIONYSI *oppidum et promontorium*, which is only a corruption of the same term.* The Greeks in fact, observed the same ceremonies used in the temple of the Indian Rama, which in their country were appropriated to Bacchus, and as their names were nearly similar, they naturally and justly concluded them to be one and the same deity, as in truth, they were; though the Indian was by far the more ancient of the two. The stupendous temple of Ramasseram, one of the most ancient and superb in India, and situated on an island of the same name between Ceylon and the continent, should not be forgotten, as it serves farther to demonstrate, at what a remote æra, and with what fervent zeal this deity was adored. No objection will be raised here by any intelligent Indian scholar, on account of Parashri or Parasu Ram, and Ramchandra being different avatars, because the three Ramas are there generally supposed to be only three different representations of the same distinguished person; and Sir William Jones has given it as his decided opinion,

* Pliny, lib. vi. cap. 22. and Ptolemæi Geograph. ab Asia, xii.

that they all have reference to the RAMA of our Scriptures, the first great sovereign and legislator of Asia.*

From various resembling circumstances intimated above, and many others that might be pointed out, in a comparison of Mr. Knox's and other authentic European accounts of the Ceylonese with those given us of the inhabitants of the Indian Continent, no doubt, I think, can remain of that vast island, thought by Strabo to have been as large as Britain itself, having been originally colonized from it. Nor is it in their civil customs and religious rites alone, that this is apparent, but in their language, of which, if we may judge from the few specimens exhibited in the publications of Mr. Knox and the earlier Portuguese and Dutch voyagers, many words appeared to be of Sanscreet derivation, as Dio, *God;* Dio Loco, *Heaven;* Malea, the name given by Ptolemy to the mountains of the island, and corresponding to the Hindoo name of Malleam, the high country on the continent; Maha-grammum, in Ptolemy, the old name for Candi the present capital, and Mavali-Ganga, the name of the most considerable river, and which means the *Ganges of the great Bali;*† who was the Indian Hercules, and who, according to Pliny, was worshipped as well as Bacchus, by the superstitious sons of Taprobana.‡ The more full investigation of this important point must be left to abler judges in that line than myself, having never had any great predilection for the study of dead languages, and delighting rather, according to the last cited author's elegant remark, to gather the *fruit of the tree of science*, than to entangle myself with *the leaves and the branches.* Fortunate is it, however, for her interests, that there are and have been others, and in particular, that great linguist himself, who have not had the same unconquerable aversion to philological inquiries. The internal parts of the island are inhabited by a race of men to whom Knox gives the appellation

* Asiatic Researches, Vol. II. p. 401. † Knox's Hist. of Ceylon, p. 108.

‡ Pliny, lib. vii. cap. 22.

of Vaddahs, a name of doubtful derivation, and many tribes of these people, hardy, brave, and ferocious in their manners, never quit their native mountains, but roam over them and the vast forests that clothe them to their lofty summits, in all the licentious wildness of uncivilized nature. The natives nearer the coast, more accustomed to associate with foreigners, and consequently of more polished manners, are said to be an ingenious and industrious, though perfidious, race; temperate in their diet, and moderate in their passions; addicted to commerce, and skilled in agriculture. They are recorded to be descended of the old race of the Chingelays, thought to have emigrated hither at some remote period from China, but neither these nor the Vaddahs appear to be that powerful aboriginal race, whose Herculean labours erected those astonishing monuments of ancient art, the pagodas that abound in this island; pagodas built in the same style, and decorated for the most part, with the same mythological designs as the oldest and most venerated temples of the continent. The numerous islands scattered around Taprobana, and known to us by the name of the Maldives, another Sanscreet appellative, amounting to many thousands, shew that some terrible convulsion in nature, either by the agency of water or fire, has at some remote period taken place in this region of Asia, a convulsion, that probably rent them from the main land, and was fatal to the primitive inhabitants. The terrible catastrophe may possibly be recorded in those *ancient writings*, which our English traveller affirms he beheld engraven on some rocks at Bandi Uda, and in the northern districts, in characters many yards in length, and cut so deep, that they will probably last to the end of the world. He says, he had inquired concerning their meaning of Hindoos, Malabars, Chingelays, and Moors, but none of those understood them.* These characters, probably Devanagari, are well worthy the attention of Indian scholars, who may now visit the island under the

* Hist. of Ceylon, p. 112.

auspices of a liberal and scientific British governor; and copies of them correctly taken, should be submitted to the literati of Asia. We shall have occasion in the approaching reign of Claudius, to revisit this noble island; at present the current of events recals us to the continent.

Such, as has been described above, was the situation of Southern India, and such were the chiefs who bore the principal sway in that country about the commencement of the Christian æra. In an early part of the first century, its shores were visited by a philosopher of very singular manners and cast of character, who, if his biographer, Philostratus, may be credited, was received with the greatest respect by its sages, and with the highest distinction by the sovereign of Western India, of the dynasty above mentioned, as well as by other princes in that quarter, of whose respective courts, of their manner of living, and the maxims by which they governed the people subject to them, we find recorded in that life, considerable and very valuable, could we be certain they were authentic, details. Throughout the whole narration, however, of the adventures of Apollonius Tyanæus in the regions of the higher Asia, there are blended so many improbable stories, as appear to give it an air of romance. In his description too of certain places said to have been visited by him, he is grossly erroneous, particularly in that part, where the writer presents us with a picture of Babylon, at the time of the philosopher's pretended residence during twenty months at that metropolis, which contradicts every other account that has descended to us from contemporary writers; the biographer representing it as then flourishing in undiminished glory,* whereas, on the contrary, the united voice of the historians of that period, truly pourtrays it as the fallen Babylon, utterly desolate and buried in its own immense ruins,† the temple of Belus, and

* Philostrati Vita Apollonii Tyanæi, lib. iii. cap. 15, 16.

† Pliny, lib. xvi. cap. 26. Dio Cassius, lib. lxviii. p. 785.

the walls alone standing, within whose ample limits ranged the wild beasts kept there for the amusement of the Parthian monarchs, when they engaged in the pleasures of the chase.

After all, Apollonius might have visited the site of Babylon, and possibly resided at some magnificent city risen from its ruins in the neighbourhood, though Philostratus, indulging a rhetorical propensity, might have drawn his description from sources of a more ancient date than the period of that visit. Of the courts of the Indian princes, he could refer to no such preceding sources of information for the very particular description inserted in his book, and I am inclined to think that, some little parade of eloquence excepted, the relation is so far correct as to intitle it to a place in this volume. The first of the sovereigns whose court he visited, after crossing the Indus, was that of Phraotes, a prince most probably of Parthian descent, since the name is not Indian, and repeatedly occurs, as we have seen, in the dynasty of the Parthian princes. By whatever means, therefore, he became possessed of the kingdom of the ancient Taxiles, as this is expressly said to have been, and the name of it to have remained to that day unchanged; or, however rigidly he might have adopted the habits and maxims of the severer classes of Indians, his affinity to the sovereigns of that line, by marriage, or otherwise, can scarcely be doubted, and the private conference which he held with Apollonius, *in the Greek language*, seems to demonstrate also the connection of his ancestors with the Greek sovereigns of Bactria, in whose courts that language was current. The noble simplicity that reigned in the palace of this prince, not only in the style of its construction, but in the ornaments that decorated it, the unaffected majesty of his deportment, the magnanimity of his sentiments, the warmth of his hospitality, the abstinence observed by him in diet, and his moderation in the use of the vast wealth and power possessed by him, exhibit indeed a sublime portrait of a wise and just king, and may possibly be a true one of the prince in

question, since many Indian princes in those elevated situations have continued rigid disciples of the Brahmins, and uncorrupted amidst all the splendour and luxury of an Eastern throne. Yet the wisdom, the temperance, the manly fortitude displayed in the character of the philosophic Phraotes, seem evidently intended as a strong contrast, which they undoubtedly afford, to the unbounded voluptuousness of other Eastern potentates; and, in particular, to what we read in Strabo and Quintus Curtius, who derived their information from sources generally current in those days, and well known to Philostratus, of the effeminacy, the profusion, and the gorgeous magnificence of Musicanus, king of Deccan. In his description of India, we trace throughout the moralizing sage of Tiana, rather than the curious Indian traveller; yet from that description, no inconsiderable portion of instruction may be gleaned by the historian.

From the detail then of what he saw, examined, and collected on the spot, we may assert, that in the first century the Higher India, or Hindostan, though not wholly free, on its Western limits, from Scythian control, yet in its interior regions continued still a vast and powerful empire, divided, as on its first foundation, into various great feudatory kingdoms, governed by their respective princes, with one supreme maharajah at their head. From Strabo also,* who flourished nearly about the same period, we learn, that India was in his time partitioned out among one hundred and eighteen great nations, each of which was governed by its own particular prince, controlled by one presiding monarch, who by the original constitution of the country, had the sole power of calling forth and directing the national vengeance against the common foe, and of summoning all the inferior rajahs to the field, at the head of the quota of troops which every separate province was compelled by ancient stipulation, to furnish. The regal honours both in the supreme and in the subordinate chiefs were hereditary, and they

* Strabonis Geograph. lib. xv. p. 719.

had the power of enacting laws, and of inflicting death in their respective districts; but were compelled, by the most tremendous obligations and the forfeiture of cast, to regulate their decision by the grand code of national institutes. By those institutes they were enjoined once a day to give public audience to the assembled people, to hear petitions, to redress grievances, and to determine differences arising among their subjects; nor could they rise from the tribunal till all were heard, and every claim adjusted. In foreign negotiations, the public faith, when once plighted in any treaty, was inviolably preserved, and the figure of an anchor, the sacred symbol of truth and stability, Philostratus acquaints us, was engraved upon the grand imperial signet, used upon those solemn occasions.*

From this general survey of the Indian empire and jurisprudence, let us descend to some interesting particulars reported by the biographer of Apollonius. Let us not be forgetful, however, of the necessary caution given above, with respect to reposing implicit belief in his statements, while we enter the palace of the particular prince of Western India, visited by that philosopher, and the chosen object of his warm panegyric.

That the reader may more fully comprehend the writer's intent in drawing this portrait, I shall present him with a previous sketch, from Strabo, of the grandeur of the court of Musicanus, and the rather, because as in the case of Calanus before stated, I omitted to state the curious particulars where they ought more properly to have been inserted. The kingdom of Musicanus extended southward, towards the mouth of the Indus and Pattala, and is judiciously conjectured by Dr. Vincent to have occupied the site of the modern SEWA.† The vast influx of wealth necessarily pouring into a region situated at the entrance of a river into which were brought from all quarters the richest articles of Eastern com-

* Philostratus, lib. iii. cap. 11. † Voyage of Nearchus, p. 220.

merce, will very sufficiently account for the super-abundant treasure possessed by this luxurious monarch, the splendour of whose court is said to have exceeded that of Persia. The front of his palace was erected on lofty columns of porphyry richly gilded, round which to the very summit, were twined artificial vines of solid gold, and amid the branches appeared the figures of Indian birds, the brilliancy of whose plumage is unrivalled, executed in jewelery. The inside of it was one continued blaze of magnificence, and abounded with whatever could gratify even to satiety the delighted ear and the astonished eye. In one apartment the stranger was soothed with the warblings of the softest music; in another, was heard the quick but measured step of the mazy dance; a third echoed with the wanton songs of the sirens of beauty; and a fourth resounded with the frantic mirth of the bacchanal. The monarch himself, who seems to have placed his chief happiness in the enjoyment of a supine and voluptuous indolence, was arrayed in a splendid vest of gold and purple, richly embroidered. He was incessantly surrounded with a train of women, who spent their whole time in perfuming his tresses and adorning his person; while their licentious conversation and gestures served as a perpetual incentive to libidinous pleasures. When he condescended to appear in public, silver censers, in which burned the richest aromatics of the East, were constantly borne before him, as if he were a god, and he lay extended on a litter of gold, the sumptuous covering of which was fringed with rows of the most costly pearl. His wives and concubines followed in litters of the same precious metal; while, whether on a march, or engaged in the chase, he was followed by an innumerable guard, as well as by subordinate officers, who carried branches echoing with the wild melody of the sweetest birds produced in the forests of India.*

Let us now reverse the portrait. Leaving the luxurious race of Southern India, let us turn our eye to her more northern progeny,

* Strabo, lib. xv. p. 666. Quintus Curtius, lib. viii. cap. 9.

and enter with Philostratus, the palace of Phraotes. There all was economy, regularity, and simplicity. Under that roof prevailed no vain parade of unnecessary pomp; no train of servants, pampered and insolent, crowding the lofty gate; no waste of treasures, better employed to great national purposes, were to be observed. The apartments of state were spacious and convenient, decently, and even elegantly, decorated; but without glare and profusion. In the hall of audience, the balance of justice was suspended on high with a steady hand, for at that tribunal the voice of adulation was unheard; the claims of individual interest unnoticed. In the interior apartments, the eye and the ear met with no object to inflame, no possible incentive to seduction; the wanton smile of the court-siren, betrayed not the unguarded youth; the song of immodesty was suppressed, and the banquet of intemperance forbidden. The whole was the residence of dignified virtue and sublime philosophy. Of the declamatory speeches that passed at this meeting between the Indian prince and the Greek philosopher, I forbear to give a literal translation, because I consider them merely as the laboured production of the pen of the biographer; but the above is the substance of them; and if there were any basis of truth for the assertions of the former, one observation escapes him, which seems to prove the dependance of Phraotes upon some foreign conqueror, for, he acquaints him, that he was accustomed, not only freely to bestow his riches on those of his friends who needed them, but even to allot a portion of his wealth to the barbarians bordering on his dominions, with the professed view both of preventing the menaced incursions of those barbarians themselves, and that they might serve as guards to keep off the invasion of still more ferocious barbarians beyond them. From this passage it appears evident, that Phraotes, whether of Parthian or Indian origin, at that period was tributary to the Sogdian or southern Scythians, whom he gladly subsidized, to defend him against the more savage northern hordes; meaning the Hunns,

who finally vanquished and drove before them, the Scythians who had seized upon the Bactrian kingdom.*

After these discourses, they enter the private garden of the palace, which contained the royal bath, and was a stadium in length. In the centre of this secluded spot was a delightful fountain, continually playing, and renewed by springs of the purest and coldest water. On each side of it extended a long avenue, in which Phraotes occasionally exercised himself, after the *Greek* fashion, in darting the javelin and throwing the discus, for he is said to have been of a muscular form, and though so rigid a philosopher, not to have exceeded twenty-seven years of age. After having bathed, they returned to the palace, and being both crowned, as was the custom, partake of a repast rather too substantial, one would be inclined to think, for such philosophic and abstemious sages, and very inconsistent with Indian, though not with Parthian, manners. Lions dressed entire, goats, boars, and thighs of tigers, are numbered among the grosser viands of this Eastern banquet; the only food of the king, however, and of Apollonius, were the herbs, fruits, and other vegetables, which it also abundantly afforded. Vast goblets of silver and gold (the only mention we here find made of those precious metals) contained the liquors served round to the company; what the beverage was it is impossible to say, as Phraotes had before declared, that he never drank wine but when *sacrificing to the sun.* The martial clangor of cymbals and fifes, played by a band of thirty musicians, saluted them while at dinner; and the air of the banqueting room was perfumed, not by artificial essences, but by branches of laurel, myrtle, and other sweet-scented plants dispersed about the apartment. After the entertainment, a number of Indian youths were introduced, who amused the company with various feats of activity, in which the suppleness of the Indian form, and the dexterity of the Indian archers, were displayed to perfection. After

* Vide Apoll. Tyan. lib. ii. cap. 11. p. 87.

our philosophers had indulged themselves in a conversation protracted till day-break, in which various topics relating to ethics, history, and metaphysics, not necessary to be here detailed, were extensively discussed, the assembly was dissolved.*

If, however, the palace of Phraotes was a fabric of such uniform simplicity of construction and decoration, far different was the superb temple of the sun, which they beheld in the great city of Taxila, on which a reverential awe of the Deity, adored in his brightest symbol, had induced the sovereign of that kingdom to bestow the utmost labour of art, and such an unbounded profusion of gold and precious stones of every kind and colour, as one might think, would have exhausted the mines of both Golconda and Pegu. The lofty walls of this solar temple were composed of red marble, resembling the fire of his own resplendent sphere, interspersed at intervals, with plates of burnished gold, broad at the base, and ending pyramidically like the rays emitted from it. On the floor, in a kind of mosaic work of jewelry, was wrought the similitude of the morning star, personified in the mythology of India, and worshipped under the name of AURUNA, the charioteer of day. No object ever yet displayed to human sight, could equal that resplendent pageant, either for richness or lustre; being wholly composed of various coloured stones, infinite in number, and exquisite in beauty, that seemed to burn upon the illumined pavement.† In this magnificent temple, and to the honour of the presiding deity, was probably performed that ancient remarkable circular dance mentioned by Lucian,‡ as peculiar to the Indian priests, who, says that writer, προς την ανατολην ϛαντες, standing with their faces towards the east, worship the sun in a sacred dance imitative of the motion of his own orb. When to this we add what Sir William Jones has informed us, that the works of an ancient Indian sage, named Yavan Acharya,

* Vide Apoll. Tyan. lib. ii. cap. 11. p. 87. † Ibid.

‡ Lucian de Saltatione, in Operibus.

contain a system of the universe, founded on the principle of *attraction* and the *central position* of the sun, and farther, that the names of the planets and zodiacal stars are found in the oldest Indian records,* we can scarcely deny them, in the most ancient periods, the credit of very high advance in astronomical science.

Nor was Apollonius, though generally absorbed in more profound inquiries in the sublime speculations of mystic, or rather magic, theology, entirely inattentive to the progress of the Indians, under their Greek masters, in the liberal and polite arts; for he acquaints us, that in the same temple, he saw two colossal statues of Alexander in gold, two of the vanquished Porus in brass, and one of Ajax, whose history they had learned from the Greeks, in ivory.† In his subsequent visit to the Brachmans in their secluded mountainous recesses of upper India, where Zerdusht had visited them five hundred years before, he found them still more advanced in those abstruse sciences which, at that period, were so much in vogue throughout Asia; of which no more striking instances need be adduced, than their fabrication of artificial thunder and lightning, which they are said both by this writer and Themistius, from their towers to have played off against the assailing enemy, a circumstance which seems to demonstrate the truth of Mr. Halhed's assertion, concerning the ancient use of gunpowder in India: and the seven *mystical rings*, which were given to ward off impending evil, by the sage Brachman Jarchas, to Apollonius, and were respectively composed of the *seven metals* by which the seven planets were at once designated and symbolized. But for an account of these and various other matters, connected with the ancient arts and sciences of India, I must refer the reader to an express dissertation, in the Indian Antiquities, on the literature of India.‡

* Asiatic Researches, Vol. I. p. 340.

† Philostrat. Vit. Apoll. Tyan. lib. xi. p. 335; edit. Paris.

‡ Ind. Antiq. Vol. VII. p. 675.

The regular course of historical events now brings us near to the period in which an occurrence took place of the greatest importance to the commerce of the Alexandrian Greeks and the Romans with India: I mean the discovery of the MONSOON by Hippalus; for though it has been clearly proved, by Dr. Vincent, that the periodical winds in the Indian seas, bearing this name, must have been known long before to the Indian and Arabian merchants, yet the secret seems to have been inviolably preserved, till this period, in their own breasts, from all participation of foreigners, and the following accident is conjectured to have been the occasion of its promulgation to the traders of other nations. The reader, it is presumed, need scarcely be informed, that in the Indian seas, along the whole coast from Japan quite to Madagascar, those winds are called MONSOONS, which are known to blow regularly at stated seasons in a particular direction; that is, during six months of the year from the north-east, and six months from the north-west quarter. The period of the shifting of these monsoons is often a season of great danger to the navigation of those seas, being attended with terrible squalls and tempests, which require the ablest skill and most vigorous exertions of the Oriental mariner to support his foundering bark amidst the conflicting elements. By long and diligent attention to the course of the winds in question, and by correct observation of the opposite coasts, and the site of the Indian emporia, Hippalus, the captain of an Alexandrian vessel, is said, *first* of all the Greeks, to have left the former tedious course along the winding shores of Arabia and Persia, and, launching into the vast ocean, to have found a more rapid passage to Malabar by the south-west monsoon; on which afterwards the grateful Greeks conferred his name.* The fact, as related in the Periplus, is possible and even probable, but there is also another competitor for this honour, to whom it is necessary in this place to introduce the reader.

* Periplus Mar. Erythr. p. 32.

During the short period of about seventy-five years, reckoning from the conquest of Augustus to Claudius, that the Romans had established themselves in Egypt, they had extended their empire far into Arabia, and over the coasts of the Red sea; from the different ports of which, even beyond the mouth of the Straits, they exacted an annual tribute. The revenues thus received were, in the reign of Claudius, farmed by a person named Annius Plocamus, whose freedman sailing round the shore to collect it, was hurried out of his tract by the violence of the monsoon, and carried in a contrary direction, first to Carmania, on the Persian coast, and then to Hippura, a part of Taprobana. He was hospitably treated by the sovereign of the country, who made many inquiries concerning Cæsar and the Roman empire, and had his curiosity fully gratified. He is said, by Pliny, to have particularly examined the *denarii* which his guest had brought with him, and from that examination to have been impressed with an high idea of Roman justice and honour, when he discovered that those pieces of money, though coined in different mints and under the management of different persons, yet were all of the same sterling value and weight. Under this impression he resolved to send an embassy to Rome with the returning stranger, to solicit the alliance and cultivate the friendship of such a distinguished people; and to render it the more respectable, he placed at the head of it a Rajah (RACHIAS) of considerable rank in the island. After a stay of six months in Taprobana, the freedman of Plocamus obtained leave to depart, accompanied by the embassador and his train, who, on their arriving at the Roman capital, astonished that people with an account of the magnitude, wealth, fertility, and extreme populousness of their native island. They told them it contained five hundred towns; that Palesimundus, its metropolis, alone contained no less than two hundred thousand inhabitants, and that it had a noble haven; that in the interior of the island expanded a lake of such vast dimensions that two great

rivers issued from its ample bason, the largest of which discharged its waters, by three broad channels, into the haven above mentioned; that it abounded with gold and silver, and all kinds of precious gems, but particularly pearls of the rarest kind; and that its spices were the richest of the East. They added, that the crown was elective; an advanced age, an unblemished character, and a benevolent disposition, were the qualifications most sought after in conferring that exalted dignity; and they enumerated the laws by which the king was compelled to govern both himself and his subjects: but lest the crown should ever become hereditary, and the prince, of consequence, in their opinion, (taken up perhaps from dear-bought experience,) tyrannical, if he afterwards married, or begat children, he was compelled to abdicate the throne. In all affairs of importance he was assisted by a council of *thirty*, but from these there was an appeal, in criminal causes, to a tribunal of *seventy*; and if the sentence passed in the former court should be reversed by the latter, either for its injustice or any other sufficient cause, degradation and ruin to all its members were the inevitable consequence. The king himself, for enormous crimes, was subjected to capital punishment; but no human arm inflicted it; royal blood must not flow upon the sword of the subject; the hungry tiger tore to pieces the condemned monarch, or the enraged elephant trampled him to death under his feet.* Many other circumstances concerning Taprobana and its inhabitants, are recorded by Pliny; but from the incredibility of some, and the known fallacy of others, it would be useless to enumerate them.

Towards the middle and close of the first century after Christ, flourished Pliny, and the author of the Periplus of the Erythræan Sea, who bears the name of Arrian, but who certainly was not the Arrian of Nicomedia, who wrote the Indian expedition of Alexander. From their united accounts we are able to collect some very

* Pliny, lib. vi. cap. 22.

interesting particulars relative to the commerce carried on by the Romans with the Indians, and the articles in which they principally trafficked. Among those exported for the use of the luxurious sons of Rome may be numbered all the various spices and aromatics that grow in the rich and abundant soil of India; but particularly, and in large quantities, the cinnamon of Ceylon, and the pepper of Cottonara; different kinds of medical drugs of high value, unguents, odoriferous gums, spikenard, frankincense, and other costly perfumes, as well for the use of individuals, as the service of the temples; the curious productions of the Indian loom in manufactured muslins and silks, plain and embroidered; murrhin vases, ivory, ebony, and other precious woods. Among her exported gems in most esteem were the onyx, sapphires, rubies, topazes, diamonds, and pearls of extraordinary beauty and magnitude. Among articles imported were the useful metals, which their own country but scantily supplied to the Indians, and, particularly, as at the present day, *silver* in considerable quantities, coined and in ingots; the wines of Italy, Greece, and Arabia; some sorts of slight woollen cloths, and linens; coral; and glass vessels of different kinds and various dimensions.* In this productive commerce, according to Pliny, the Romans annually invested fifty millions of sesterces, about four hundred thousand pounds sterling; and the clear profit of its returns amounted to *one hundred per cent.*†

Such, according to the classical writers of Greece and Rome, was India in the first century. The native accounts, as collected in Ferishta, affirm, that after the death of Bickermajit and Salbahan, the empire fell into anarchy and confusion; that the great vassals of the crown assumed independence in their respective governments; and the very name of emperor became, in a great degree, obliterated from the minds of the people.‡ In this state it seems to have

* Periplus Maris Erythræi, p. 28 to 31; edit. Hudson.

† Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. vi. cap. 23.

‡ Ferishta, Vol. I. p. 13.

continued for a very extended period, since the next person mentioned, in the book just cited, is Basdeo, who, after having reduced Bengal and Bahar, is said to have assumed imperial honours, and to have erected a new kingdom at Canouge in the year 330 after Christ. During his reign, Baharam, the sovereign at that time seated on the throne of Persia, is said to have visited India in disguise, under the assumed character of a merchant.

An accident, which redounded much to the honour of Baharam, was the occasion of his being discovered. A wild elephant, in the season of lust, attacked him in the neighbourhood of Canouge, and he pierced the animal's forehead with an arrow, which acquired him such reputation, that the Emperor Basdeo ordered the merchant into his presence; where Baharam was known by an Indian nobleman, who had carried the tribute, some years before, to Persia: an evident proof that the feudal dependence of India on the sovereigns of the former kingdom still remained. Basdeo, being fully assured of the truth of this statement, affectionately embraced the royal stranger.

Baharam, being thus constrained to assume the regal character, was treated with the utmost magnificence and respect while he remained at the Indian court; where he married the daughter of Basdeo, and returned, after some time, into Persia. Basdeo and the princes, his posterity, ruled the empire in tranquillity for the space of *eighty years.**

Ramdeo, a prince of the Mahratta tribe, and the general of the imperial forces, then ascended the throne, by the united consent of the assembled nobles, and he is said to have been a valiant, wise, and generous monarch.

After a glorious reign of fifty-four years, Ramdeo yielded to the stroke of fate, but the actions of his life, says our author, have rendered his name immortal. Notwithstanding his great power, he

* Ferishtah, Vol. I. p. 13.

thought it prudent to continue the payment of the usual tribute to Feroz, the father of the great Cai-cobad, king of Persia.

After the death of Ramdeo, a dispute arose between his sons concerning the succession, which afterwards terminated in a civil war. Partab-chund, who was captain-general to the emperor Ramdeo, taking advantage of the public confusion, seized upon the vacant throne, and, to secure the possession of it, extirpated the imperial family. Partab was cruel, treacherous and tyrannical. He drew by fair, but false, promises, the princes of the empire from their respective governments, and by cutting off the most formidable, rendered the rest obedient to his commands. An uninterrupted course of success made Partab too confident of his own power. He neglected, for some years, to send the usual tribute to Persia, dismissing the ambassadors of the great Nushirvan, with empty hands, and great dishonour, from his court. A Persian invasion, however, soon convinced Partab, that it was in vain to contend with the lord paramount of his empire. He was, in short, forced to pay up his arrears, to advance the tribute of the ensuing year, and to give hostages for his future obedience.

Partab mounted the imperial throne of India about the year 500 of Christ; and though he left the empire in the possession of his family, it soon declined in their hands. The dependent princes rendered themselves absolute in their respective governments; and the titular emperor became so insignificant, with regard to power, that he gradually lost the name of Maharajah, or Supreme, and had a title of less dignity substituted in its place.

Soon after the death of Partab-chund, Annindeo, a chief of the tribe of Bice, seized upon the extensive kingdom of Malva, and, with rapidity of conquest, brought the peninsula of Guzzerat, the country of the Mahrattas, and the whole province of Berar, under his controul. Annindeo was cotemporary with Chosru Parvez, king of Persia; and he reigned over the dominions he had conquered for sixteen

years. At the same time that Annindeo broke the power of the empire, by his usurpation of the best of its provinces, one Maldeo, a man of an obscure origin, raised himself into great power, and took the city of Delhi and its territory, from the reigning family. He soon after reduced the imperial city of Canouge, which was so populous, that there were, within the walls, thirty thousand shops, in which arreca, a kind of nut, which the Indians use as Europeans do tobacco, was sold. There were also in Canouge, sixty thousand bands of musicians and singers, who paid a tax to government. Maldeo, during the space of forty years, kept possession of his conquests, but he could not transmit them to his posterity. Every petty governor and hereditary chief in Hindostan rendered themselves independent, and the name of universal empire was lost, till it was established, by the Mohammedans, on the confines of India and Persia.*

Such are the contracted, the *jejune* accounts yet presented to the public, relative to this long intervening period, in the only book that professedly treats concerning the history of India, and affirmed to be taken from the Mahabbarat. There are, indeed, to be found long lists of Indian sovereigns in the Asiatic Researches, but they are *magni nominis umbra,* imperial NAMES only! In the account of the Subahs also, in the Ayeen Akbery, there are some detached fragments of the history of their respective sovereigns, but they are of so unconnected and desultory a nature, so confined in their allusion, and withal so little instructive or interesting, being for the most part, nothing more than a detail of regal murders, that there is no possibility of working them up into any form or body of regular history. Till, therefore, authentic Sanscreet documents, if there be any, a fact extremely doubtful, illustrating this dark æra, shall have been discovered and translated, we must rest satisfied with such partial gleams of information as we may be able to procure from

* Ferishta's Indian History, Vol. I. p. 16.

the annals of the neighbouring nations, and for the present, in search of such partial intelligence, return once more to the page of Parthian and Roman history, whose sovereigns, about this time, reigned paramount lords of Asia, and possessed between them, its finest provinces. With respect to the sources of information above mentioned, whatever advantage or instruction can be obtained, either from the Ayeen Akbery relations, or the catalogues of their kings in the Asiatic Researches, by comparing them, in periods posterior to the Hegira, with the details of the exploits of the earliest Mohammedan invaders, of India, to be found in Abulfeda, Al Makin, Abulfaragius, and other Eastern historians, consulted in the succeeding book, shall not be neglected, but the fullest possible use made of both.

The commencement of the second century of the Christian æra, introduces upon the vast theatre of Asia, one of the greatest princes and ablest generals that ever sate on the imperial throne of Rome. A series of glorious exploits crowned the early youth of Trajan, and his more advanced life was rendered illustrious, by the conquest of the hardy race of Dacians, who had long braved the Roman power, and the complete, though, as it eventually proved, only temporary, subjugation of the Parthian empire, that great rival of the Roman, which perpetually exhausted her revenues, and was drenched with the blood of her bravest warriors. The fame of these mighty exploits of Trajan, having reached India, that had so long also smarted under the Parthian scourge, the sovereign of its western domain dispatched a splendid embassy to offer him his hearty congratulations, and, probably, in the dread of his proceeding to the Indian shores, the submission of himself and his subjects. These ambassadors were received with great kindness by Trajan, and treated with distinguished respect. It is evident from Dio Cassius, Eutropius, and all the authors who have discussed the events of this emperor's reign, that ardently admiring the character of Alexander the

Great, studiously desirous of imitating his conduct, and emulous of his unbounded fame, Trajan had certainly formed in his mind, the daring project of invading India; and with that view, had made diligent and minute inquiries concerning the customs, manners, population, and mode of fighting of the inhabitants. We are informed by Eutropius,* that he had actually prepared a fleet in the Red Sea, for the purpose of this invasion; but his age seems to have prevented its taking place, for, according to Dio Cassius, when pursuing his conquests along the Arabian coast, on accidentally seeing a ship about to set sail for India, he regretted that the advanced period of his life forbade him to indulge any hope of carrying his arms thither.† The Romans, however, from these repeated and submissive embassies to Augustus and Trajan, affected to consider the Indians as a subjugated nation, though it must be owned, that the word Indian, was always used by that people, with the utmost latitude of signification.

Indian ambassadors, together with others from Hyrcania and Bactria, are also said to have borne to the excellent emperor Antoninus Pius, the congratulations of their respective sovereigns; and in the splendid procession that graced the magnificent triumph of Aurelian, after his Syrian victories, consisting of captives from every region of Asia, Indians are enumerated by his biographer Vopiscus, but we have no particulars of any conflict that he ever maintained with any prince of India, and they were probably Indians serving in the army of the king of Persia, when that army hastened to the succour of Palmyra, and the unfortunate queen his ally, besieged by Aurelian, and was defeated before its walls.‡

Nothing of any more consequence, than the bare mention, in an indistinct manner, of the name and wealth of this secluded country, of whose interior, either geographically or politically, they knew so

* Eutropii Hist. Rom. lib. viii. p. 3. † Dio Cassius, lib. liv. p. 784.

‡ Consult Flav. Vopiscus in Vitâ Aureliani, p. 219.

little, occurs in classical authors, till the reign of Constantine; the fame of whose Eastern conquests had reached India, when, on his erecting the proud city that bore his name, and making it the seat of his extended empire, a splendid embassy with presents of the most rare and costly kind, was dispatched to him by a most puissant, and possibly the imperial, sovereign of India, who, according to the date of the year specified by Cedrenus, a Grecian monk of the eleventh century, 330 after Christ, should be that very founder, about the same period, of the new dynasty at Canouge, mentioned above by the name of BASDEO. The distinguished person to whose charge these magnificent presents were consigned, is called, by Cedrenus, Mitrodorus, a name like Mitra-gupta, evidently Sanscreet, with a Greek termination, and who was said to have been conversant with the Brahmins, and with Brahmin learning.*

It was impossible but that the succeeding sovereigns of so vast an empire as that which boasted Constantinople for its metropolis originally was, a city in which the commerce of Asia soon began to centre, and with such powerful fleets as they maintained in the Mediterranean and the Euxine seas, so capable of protecting or annoying the trade of either Northern or Southern Asia, should not receive the respectful obeisance of all the great trading powers of that continent; and, in consequence, we find, among others, Indian sovereigns, most probably of the Malabar coast, sending splendid embassies to the Greek emperors Theodosius, Heraclius, and Justinian. Of these the most superlatively magnificent was that dispatched to Heraclius after his triumph over the vanquished Persians, and the presents which consisted of a quantity of fine pearl and precious stones, sufficiently denote that they came from the Balhara or some prince of Southern India, most interested in the Grecian commerce with Alexandria, and the New Rome, as Constantinople was for some time denominated.† With respect to Justinian, the immediate

* Cedreni Annales, p. 242; edit. Basil, 1566. † Vopiscus in Vit. Heraclii, p. 234.

and extensive commercial intercourse kept up in his time between the Indian and Greek empires, is demonstrated by the ample digest of laws, enacted for the purpose of regulating that trade, both by himself and former emperors, but in his reign first collected into a body, and known by the name of the Justinian code. The value, as fixed by imperial decrees, or by individual traders of the different commodities that came to the market of Constantinople, and the duties paid upon each, are in that code distinctly enumerated; but the subject having been often and ably investigated by preceding writers, especially by the celebrated and very learned Bishop Huet, on the commerce of ancient nations, and by others, who have recorded the events of this period, I shall not deviate from the regular course of historical narration by entering into particulars. Concerning, however, the most precious of all commodities then brought from India, by the way of Persia, the silk of Serinda, a district in the subah of Delhi, which is expressly stated in the Ayeen Akbery to abound in silk-worms, what Procopius, the historian of the events of Justinian's reign, has recorded, is too curious to be wholly omitted; for, according to that writer, so exceedingly rare and costly was this article, having been sold, in the time of Aurelian, for its weight in gold, that the emperor and empress were tempted to stoop from their regal dignity to the fraudful monopoly of it; by which they gained immense sums, and the merchants of Constantinople, concerned in that branch of traffic, were universally reduced to beggary. Determined no longer to be obliged to obtain it from such a vast distance and by the circuitous route of Persia, a kingdom with which the Greek empire was in constant hostility, Justinian dispatched two monks to Serinda to learn all the particulars of the silk-trade, and if possible to procure and bring back with them large quantities of the worm from whose viscera it is produced, in order that he might be enabled to establish manufactories of it in the provinces of his own empire. Those monks faithfully executed

their commission, but finding it utterly impossible to bring the worm in a living state over so vast a tract of land and ocean as they had to traverse, they procured abundance of their eggs, which were carefully brought over in a hollow cane, from which, by following the Indian manner of covering them with dung, and applying to the embryo mass an artificial heat sufficient to mature the dormant vital energy, the animal was produced in numerous swarms. By this process was propagated the original brood of all the silk-worms so abundant in succeeding ages throughout the Greek islands, Italy, and the rest of Europe.*

The reign of Justinian forms an æra particularly memorable on account of an event having taken place in it, which throws some transient gleams of light upon the interior of India, the voyage thither and travels in that regionof Cosmas, thence called Indico-pleustes. He was a merchant of Alexandria, and in his younger days had travelled in that capacity to Ceylon and the Malabar coast, where he had carried on a considerable traffic. Being of a superstitious turn of mind, in his more advanced life he assumed the monastic habit, and in that seclusion, among other works, composed his *Christian Topography*, intended in an imagined zeal for the sacred Scriptures, which were never written to support any philosophical system at all, to oppose the prevailing, and, in his opinion, *heretical* philosophy of the times, which maintained that the earth was of a spherical figure; and to prove, on the contrary, that it was an immense oblong plane, not less than twelve thousand miles in length, and six thousand in breadth, encircled with walls of proportionable height, and covered with the firmament, as with a vast canopy or vault.† What is most remarkable is, that in consonance with the Indian system of geography, he contends, that far in the north there towers a mountain of prodigious elevation, behind which the sun

* Procopius de Bello Gothic. lib. iv. cap. 17.

† Cosmas Ægypt. apud Mountfaucon Collect. Patrum, lib. ii. p. 138.

rising or setting causes the vicissitudes of day and night. The only difference between them is, that the Indian cosmography, according to the Ayeen Akbery, places this mountain in the *centre* instead of the extremities of the earth. In the centre of Jambudweepa, according to that authentic register, stands a golden mountain, of a cylindrical form, which descends as far beneath as it rises above the surface of the earth. The summit of this mountain, whose altitude is 84,000 yojans, but, according to others, only 16,000 yojans, the Hindoos denominate Sommeir; and on that summit, and on its sides, they believe are the different degrees of paradise. In a direct line from the lofty golden mountain of Sommeir, at the extremity of the four quarters of the earth, their romantic imaginations have placed four cities, encompassed with walls built of bricks of gold, viz. Jumkote, Lanka, Siddahpore, and Roomuck, &c. &c.* The striking similitude between these descriptions seems to prove, either that Cosmas had consulted the books of the Brahmin astronomers, or that at that time the colleges of Alexandria and Benares believed and inculcated the same doctrines in this line of science.

How far Cosmas penetrated into India it is impossible to say; but he describes with great correctness the island of Ceylone, and the principal marts and various ports on the Malabar coast. In particular, he informs us that in his time, that island was divided into two great kingdoms, one of which was denominated *Hyacinthus;* the Greek mode of writing some word of resembling sound used by the natives. Its geographical situation, too, and its dimensions are given in that writer with tolerable precision; but of Ceylone enough has been previously observed. Cosmas on the coast of the continent enumerates *Sindu*, *Orrhotha*, *Callïana*, (possibly *Calicut,*) *Sibor*, and MALE, giving name to the whole district of Malabar; whose various emporia are enumerated, and some by names not to be found in the Periplus and Ptolemy. Undoubtedly, too, the innumerable islands in

* Ayeen Akbery, Vol. III. p. 23.

the adjoining ocean derive the name of *Maldives* from the same source. To these emporia Cosmas describes the numerous commercial vessels of Persia, as continually sailing, laden with the productions of that country for the Indian market, or bearing thence the pepper, the cinnamon, the precious gems, the fine linen, and flowered silks; the spontaneous growth of her soil, or the laboured manufacture of her looms. His religious turn of mind led our author to observe, and exult in, the number of zealous converts to that Christianity which St. Thomas had originally planted on its shores, scattered over most parts of India which he visited, but particularly abounding at Calicut, which had a regular bishop, with an establishment of priests and deacons, whence the subordinate churches were supplied. The whole of the ecclesiastical concerns of India were under the jurisdiction of the archbishop or primate of Persia, who at that time happened to be Thomas Edessenus, an intimate friend of Cosmas. This decided testimony of Cosmas to the wide diffusion of the Christian doctrines in India in the sixth century, will still farther corroborate, with the unprejudiced, the assertion of Sir W. Jones, largely commented on in the preceding volume of its ancient history, concerning the high probability of the Brahmins having seen the spurious Gospels, especially that particular Gospel throughout the East, absurdly attributed to St. Thomas himself, and their consequent interpolation of the fabulous life of Creeshna.*

The value of the work of Cosmas is greatly enhanced by his having recorded a fact which, however, has been much disputed, and the relation itself considered as the result of his ignorance of the geography of the Northern Asia, and the precise situation of its great ruling powers. Cosmas asserts, that in his day the northern parts of India were inhabited by the most populous nation of the HUNS; that the name of the sovereign then ruling over them was GOLLUS;

* See Vol. II. p. 258 and 267, of the Ancient Hist. of Hindostan; and Sir W. Jones in Asiatic Researches, Vol. I. p. 274. London quarto edit.

that his army consisted chiefly of horse, which is extremely probable, and that of those he had a most formidable body, besides a train of two thousand elephants of war. To impress his readers with an adequate idea of their numbers, in the spirit of the times, he relates a romantic story of this prince besieging a city situated in a lake, which surrendered not till the surrounding waters had been exhausted by his cavalry and elephants.* The communication is important in this historical research into the ancient state of the Indian continent; and, setting aside the romance with which it is illustrated, merits attentive consideration.

The reader has already been informed that the Huns, (*Hunni*, corruptly so called from *Ugri*) in their origin, consisted of that more savage part of the Scythian nation which inhabited the region of Asiatic Sarmatia, confining on the Palus Mæotis, and the Tanais. He has also seen how the Massagetæ, or Getæ, anciently possessing the country lying between their southern frontier and that north of India, gradually advanced their armies into that more fertile district of Asia, and settled in the finest provinces bordering on the Indus, called from them Indo-Scythia. We have found them thus settled at the commencement of the Christian æra, and doubtless the same causes, want of room, added to the temptation of a more productive soil and genial clime, induced the former, after conquering the Massagetæ, and driving them before them in a southerly direction, to pursue the same line of victory and devastation. The Huns, however, are expressly mentioned as having been defeated by that king of India, whose exploits are recorded on the copper-plate found at Mongueer; for as those hardy nations of the arctic circle, approached nearer the tropic, their vigour and spirit seem to have decayed, and they became successively the slaves of new swarms of barbarians, whose minds were not yet relaxed by pleasure, and whose sinews were not yet unbraced. The above account of Cosmas, therefore,

* Cosmas Ægypt. lib. ii. p. 336.

though generally supposed to be founded in mistake, and on his inaccurate conception of the geography of Asia, which led him to misplace the residence of this barbarous people is most probably just, and their possession, at this period, of Northern India to have been the result of conquest and usurpation. The series of dreadful irruptions made by this people, who are the same as the Avares or Avari of the Byzantine historians, during the preceding centuries of the Christian æra, into Persia, both under the dynasty of the Arsacidæ, and of Sassan, as well as their horrible and repeated outrages and massacres committed in Thrace and throughout all the provinces of the Greek empire, often compelling its sovereigns, as in particular was the case with the Emperor Mauritius, to become tributary to their overgrown power in Asia, fully justifies this conclusion, and well accounts for that general confusion and anarchy said to have prevailed at this time in the government of Hindostan, and the deficiency of national records under the predominating influence of such an unlettered and barbarous race.

During this extended period numerous armies of the same warlike banditti were accustomed to burst into and spread their cruel ravages throughout Italy, Germany, and Gaul, or, from fatal necessity, having been hired by the pusillanimity of the Western emperors to defend their invaded territories against the still more ferocious tribes of Goths and Vandals, all of the same direful Scythian origin, sometimes basely betrayed their employers, and, at others, as under the reign of the savage and imperious Attala, trampled the majesty of both empires beneath their insulting feet. The Huns probably kept the mountainous region of India bordering on the Hindoo Caucasus in complete subjugation, till the arrival in that region of the Arabian conquerors in the eighth century, for in the convulsed state of the empire, principally brought on by their own and other Scythian irruptions, there seems to have been no other power capable of effectually opposing them. Of the Getes, or in other words the

Goths, it has been observed, there are apparent remains in the present Jauts, and in the pastoral tribe of Nomurdy, that still range with their wooden habitations on wheels along the banks of the Indus, in the district anciently denominated Indo-Scythia; but the invading Huns, whether by the united exertion of the native princes, or by the Mohammedans, seem to have been utterly extirminated; since there remains in India, no vestige, even of their name, except in the inscription alluded to, and in the above account of Cosmas. Their catastrophe was nearly similar in Europe. Devoted from their infancy to the sword, and delighting only in fields of carnage, by far the greater part of that sanguinary nation seems, in the course of ages, to have fallen the just victims of that sword. Wheresoever plunder invited, or debilitated power allured, thither they hurried, a countless, an insatiate band of harpies, to devour the spoil. Frequently repulsed and with dreadful slaughter, they still returned unwearied to the combat. Their mangled carcases, in innumerable shoals, annually floated down the great rivers, and their unburied bones covered the vast plains, of Germany. Thrace was deluged with the blood of their bravest chiefs. The wretched remains of their race are supposed to have been the ancestors of the present *Hungarians*, a compound word formed of *Hun* and *Avari*.

The death of Justinian took place in the year A. D. 565, and no event that has reference to India, occurs in the page of the Byzantine historians, till the reign of Heraclius, and after his return from that glorious expedition against Persia, in which he so effectually humbled the spirit of the haughty Cosroes, its king, who in his terrible and repeated irruptions into the Greek empire, professed to aim at nothing less than the extinction of the Roman name, and fulminated the impious vow, never to make peace with the Christians, *till they had renounced their crucified God, and adopted the ancient Solar worship of the Persians*.* Complete and reiterated victory, however,

* Cedreni Annales, p. 335. edit. Basil. 1566.

attended the strenuous efforts of Heraclius, in support of his crown and his religion; while captivity and death were shortly after, the portion of the infidel blasphemer. Nor did that mighty empire, itself, thus reduced and weakened by the triumphs of Heraclius, long survive the disgrace and dissolution of one of the most renowned and powerful of its monarchs; for in A. D. 578 preceding, when the great Nushirvan sat on the throne of Persia, and Justin feebly wielded the sceptre of the Greek empire, was born at Mecca, that memorable IMPOSTOR, or rather that ambitious CHIEF, whose destroying sword, deriving from a sanguinary creed an irresistible energy, was, by the inscrutable councils of Providence, ordained to fill Asia with slaughter and desolation, and rend the diadem from the brows of her most puissant sovereigns. He did not open this pretended mission, till some time after the commencement of the reign of Heraclius, when he himself had nearly reached his fortieth year, and it was probably the distracted state of the affairs of the two greatest empires in the world, the Persian and the Greek, convulsed as they were by the violence of their mutual contests for superiority, and harrassed as they both alternately were, by the barbarous Vandal and Hunnic tribes, that gave birth in his aspiring mind, to the daring conception of a new religion and a new monarchy, to be erected on the ruin of all other religions, and all other empires upon earth. To mark their progressive advance, so far at least, as India is concerned, which it is in a most material degree, will be the principal object of the subsequent division of this work, introductory to which, the reader is presented with the following rapid sketch of India, as it existed at that period, and as correctly as it can be delineated from the few authentic documents as yet in our possession.

The whole of the Greek province, or rather reduced kingdom, of Bactria, with Candahar, Cabul, and the beautiful country of Cashmere, I consider as remaining under Scythian control; that is, of

its two leading tribes, the Massagetæ and the Huns, kept in check, and confined to that mountainous range, by the vigorous arm of the Persians, determined and prepared to oppose their further progress in Southern Asia. The frontier provinces on the west of India seem to have been, for a long time, permanently tributary to the Persian crown, but governed, as was certainly the case with Lahore and the Panjab, by its native princes; for Nushirvan, who flourished when Mohammed was born, in a public testimentary deed, preserved in Mirkhond, and addressed to his son, near the close of a life covered with glory, expressly styles himself KING OF PERSIA AND INDIA, that is, by the compelled tributary dependence of its western sovereigns; though, possibly, the monarch of even its interior region, the great Maharaja himself might not be, and in the more vigorous reigns of the warlike princes of the Sassanian dynasty, he certainly *was not free* from the payment of a considerable tribute; as its domestic history itself fully testifies, in the case of Baharam above related. But this external relation, in which he stood to Persia, though it might debilitate, had not the effect of wholly subverting the authority given him by the constitution, over the subordinate soobahdars of the empire, and the form at least remained when the substance was decayed. A particular instance of the nominal dependance, at least, of the great feudal chiefs of India on the head rajah, continuing in force even so late as the year 588 of the Hegira, or A. D. 1192, may be found in the short history added in the Ayeen Akbery, to the account of the Soobah of Delhi. There Canouge is represented, at this time, as the imperial city, and its sovereign as the maharajah, to whom all the inferior rajahs were compelled, at stated periods, to pay their personal homage; and it is recorded, that at a certain great festival, called RAISOO, celebrated at Canouge, this tribute of respect was actually paid to JYCHUND, the reigning prince, by all the rajahs of Hindostan, except by Pithowra, the rajah of Delhi, and the last of its native princes. At

this sublime festival, all the duties, even to those of the scullery, were performed by rajahs; and Pithowra, from contempt of the sovereign, not attending, "that the festival might not be incomplete," an effigy in gold of the absent rajah was formed, and by way of retorted contempt, assigned the ignoble office of porter of the gate. The rashness of Pithowra in the end, cost him his crown and his life.*

This inferior kind of sovereignty, this shadow of majesty in their respective soobahs, thus allowed them by the policy of their conquerors, on their regular payment of a fixed tribute, prevented those ancient and high-spirited chieftains from feeling so severely the galling yoke fastened by Mohammedan tyranny round their necks, while their power and influence, actively exerted in their several provinces, repressed the efforts of rising sedition. The five great princes who are said to have united their forces together to oppose the earliest invasions of Hindostan by the Mohammedans, are those of Lahore, Delhi, Ajmere, Canouge, and Callinger, and among them, doubtless, were the provinces of Superior or Northern Hindostan divided. The more southern provinces of Hindostan Proper, full of impregnable hills and castles, that as yet disdained a foreign lord, were tenanted by the daring race of Rajapouts, whose profession, from their earliest youth, was WAR, and who, if they had not been engaged and debilitated in perpetual feuds among themselves, would have been invincible by the armies of any foreign invader. The multitude of these forts wheresoever those lofty and almost perpendicular eminences of rock, or mountain, which are so common in India, allowed an opportunity for erecting them, affords sufficient evidence of the distractions, which, in ancient periods, prevailed in this country, amidst the endless contests resulting from the ambition and avarice of the more turbulent chieftains, among whom, in the most ancient annals of India, the illustrious

* Ayeen Akbery, Vol. II. p. 107.

family of the RANNA, noticed by the very same name in Ptolemy, is recorded to have been the principal. The celebrated castles and cities of Chitore, Mandu, Guallior, Rotas, Rantampoor, and others in that central region, were places of incredible strength, and in the unimproved state of the military science at that period, bade defiance to all the forces the assailants could bring against them.

The Balhara of Edrisi, and Baleocur of the classics, seems to have been the rajah of Larice, or Guzzurat; and the whole DECCAN, or *Southern India*, in which comprehensive sense the word will generally be used in these pages, as yet unviolated by foreign arms, remained in peaceable subjection to its native princes, the descendants of those who reigned there when Pliny and the author of the Periplus wrote. The mighty range of the Balagaut mountains, of height almost inaccessible, and in most places covered with impervious forests, perhaps coæval with the creation, ever afforded to its hardy bands of untamed warriors, an equally elevated and, from their remoteness, a still more secure, retreat from the invading enemy. This is abundantly proved by the innumerable, I had almost said impregnable, castles and fortified cities, if possible, still more strong by art and nature than those of Hindostan Proper, that erect their daring summits in the Peninsula, and known to us by modern names, but unalterably marked, as Rennell judiciously observes,* by their site, by the remaining monuments of Hindoo grandeur, and by other attesting circumstances, to be those renowned in the ancient history of the country. The bold and persevering efforts, in succeeding centuries, of the MOSLEM and MOGUL chiefs, to become masters of those craggy eminences, both in Hindostan, and the Deccan, the heroic feats, as well as the artful stratagems, put in practice by the intrepid and subtle Rajah race, for the purpose of repelling them, together with the final success of the former over their vanquished tribe, in both extremities of the empire

* Rennell's Memoir, p. 195. edit. 1788, being that always referred to by me.

will form the important subject of the future chapters of this history; a vast and spacious field of inquiry, or rather, shall I say, an immense ACELDAMA, *or field of blood*, covered with slaughtered millions of the human race, which the writer has not explored without the keenest anguish, nor can the humane reader contemplate without astonishment and horror.

BOOK II.

COMPREHENDING THE DETAILS OF INDIAN HISTORY, FROM THE BIRTH OF MOHAMMED, TO THE DEATH OF TIMUR BEC.

CHAPTER I.

The Eastern Authors principally cited in this Book, to illustrate the Indian History, enumerated, and some Account of themselves and their respective Works subjoined.—ABULFEDA, *his Moslem Annals and Geography.*—MIRKHOND, *the Persian Historian.*—AL MAKIN, *his Historia Saracenica.*—EBN ABDOLLATIF, *Author of the* LEB-TARIKH.—ULUG BEG, *his Epochæ Celebriores of the great Asiatic Empires, highly important for the Elucidation of their intricate Chronology.*—ABULFARAGIUS, *his Arabian Dynasties, with* POCOCK'S *Supplement to those Dynasties.*—ABULGHAZI BAHADUR, *his History of the Tartars.*—*History of Gengis Khan, compiled from* FADLALLAH, ABULCAIR, *and other Oriental Writers, by M. De Le Croix, the Elder.*—SHERIFFEDDIN *and* ARABSHAH'S *History of Timur Bec.*—EBN HAUKAL, *his Oriental Geography.*—AL EDRISI, *the Nubian Geographer.*—*Anciennes Relations of* RENAUDOT.—*Travels, in India, of* MARCO PAULO, *and others.*

HAVING in the preceding book, brought the Indian history, as far as from very scanty materials, that history could be collected, down to the commencement of the Mohammedan æra; before we enter on the present very important one, it will be proper for us to pause for a moment, and consider the sources whence, on so barren a soil

we are to derive the information which it may contain. Although in the introductory chapter to the first book, in which this subject was glanced at, I promised to avail myself of every possible advantage to be obtained from the valuable history of Mahommed Casim, Ferishtah in *Persian*, as being the only large work yet given to the public, that at all enters into any details concerning the *domestic* history of India, founded on the basis of native annals; yet as the Arabian historians of the period are not only very numerous, but sometimes circumstantial in relating the series of events that took place in the several quarters of Asia, under the dynasties of the early conquerors of that superstition, I propose invariably to compare that author, and augment and enrich his narration with what they have handed down to us concerning their progress in India, and through the regions nearest to India, in arms and in science. One of the most respectable and authentic of the Arabian writers on history and geography, consulted in the course of this book, is the celebrated Ismael Abulfeda, and of this often-cited author, together with some other authors of principal note, and their respective works, the following short account may, therefore, not be wholly unacceptable to the reader.

Ismael Abulfeda, prince of Hamah, a city in Syria, flourished in the fourteenth century, and was the author of many valuable compositions in history, jurisprudence, and philosophy; but particularly of a Treatise on Geography, and a history of the Moslem affairs, highly celebrated by the learned, both of Asia and Europe.

This geographical treatise is a judicious abstract of whatever the best Oriental authors have written upon the subject; above sixty of whom, as we are informed by Mr. Graves, are quoted in the course of this voluminous work. It is divided into tables, and has this extraordinary recommendation, that it gives the true pronunciation of the names of the cities and towns, together with their longitude and latitude; it exhibits, likewise, the names of the authors from whose

work the account of each city is taken; and, while it distinguishes the province in which it is situated, is enriched with a description of that province; not indeed extensive, but instructive and authentic. In the year 1650, Mr. Graves, at that time Savilian professor of Astronomy at Oxford, published in the original Arabic, with a Latin version subjoined, "Abulfeda's Description of Khowarazm (Charasm) and Mawaralnahr (Transoxiana,)" kingdoms whose names were, before that period, almost unknown in Europe, but which gave birth to those mighty conquerors of the Tartar race, whose arms spread terror through Asia and Europe: and who, in their imperial city of Samarcand, as we shall hereafter with astonishment behold, reigned with a splendour and magnificence unequalled in the most splendid æras of ancient Persia. Mr. Graves, likewise, left behind him a Latin translation of Abulfeda's Arabia, which was afterwards inserted, together with the original, by Mr. Gagnier, in the third volume of Dr. Hudson's "Geographiæ veteris Scriptores Græci Minores." Another Latin version of the same work was made by M. Le Croix, which was an unnecessary exertion of his great Asiatic learning; but he knew not, at the time, that Graves had already completed one. That of Le Roque had the benefit of both publications; and it is spoken of by Mr. Gagnier, with honour, in his very celebrated preface to Abulfeda's life of Mohammed. The example which Mr. Graves had set the learned, excited Mr. Gagnier, who afterwards filled the Arabic professor's chair, to issue proposals for publishing, by subscription, the complete work of Abulfeda. In this great and laudable undertaking, however, from want of proper encouragement, he failed; but the whole of Abulfeda's ANNALES MOSLEMICI, quoted so often hereafter in the pages of this work, have been since translated into Latin in a masterly manner, and recently edited by the learned M. Reiske.

The celebrated Persian historian, MIRKHOND, in the next place merits notice. He flourished in the year of the Hegira 875, of

Christ 1471, and is the author of a general history of the world, from the creation down to his own time, consisting of seven thick volumes in folio, abridged afterwards by his son Khondemir. The substance of this history has been presented to the literati of Europe, by the laborious diligence of Texeira, a learned Spaniard, and, with more accuracy, in a French publication, entitled, "Les Etats, Empires, et Principautés du Monde, Paris, 1662. An important portion of it, however, and that more particularly connected with the present period, has been recently edited, with a Latin translation, unabridged, at Vienna, under the title of of "Historia Priorum Regum Persarum post firmatum in Regno Islamismum," with ample geographical illustrations in the form of notes. In this valuable volume we have the genuine history of the two great dynasties of the Taherites and Sofferides of Persia, with the origin of the Sammanian dynasty, concerning which so many interesting particulars will occur hereafter. The Bibliotheque Orientale of M. D'Herbelot, contains, in a series of extracts under different heads, all the remaining more interesting parts of Mirkhond, that can throw any light on the subjects of this History.

Ebn Amid, more generally known to us by the name of Al Makin, flourished in Egypt, under the patronage of the Soldans of the dynasty of Jyub, (*Job,*) and compiled there, from Abu Jaffar al Tabari, and other valuable Oriental originals, who preceded him, another voluminous work on general history. But, the particular work of this author, so essentially useful in this historical research is, his Tarikh Al Moslemin, or *History of the Moslems*, of which the learned Erpenius, it is said from no very correct copy, has favoured the learned world with a Latin translation, in quarto, under the title of "Historia Saracenica." However, in some places, incorrect, a constant comparison of what is cited from Al Makin, with other works mentioned in this chapter, will prevent our being misled by any error in his text, the existence of which at all,

is greatly to be regretted in an author of such acknowledged merit.

Ebn Abdollatif composed in the year 1541, a brief, but valuable, history in Persian, of the Mohammedan monarchies, entitled, Lebtarikh, which M. Golmin, a learned French Orientalist, has translated into Latin, and which is inserted in Thevenot's Collection of Voyages. The frequent quotations from this work, by Herbelot, will fully justify me in pursuing the same line of conduct in regard to it.

As Chronology is the sister of History, and as no person can be presumed better able to disentangle the perplexities of Oriental chronology, than an Oriental, and what is more, a sovereign, whose dominions included a large portion of India itself, the *Epochæ Celebriores* of the great Ulug Beg, have been frequently consulted, and with the corrections of their accurate editor, Mr. Graves, have been found of the most important use in fixing dates, as well as elucidating events. His history is concisely as follows:

Ulug Beg, the son of Shahroc, and grandson of Timur, one of the greatest monarchs, and most celebrated astronomers of the East, succeeded to the empire, established by his illustrious ancestor, in the early part of the fifteenth century, at the time when that empire flourished in the meridian of its glory. He had already, with equal spirit and prudence, for a long series of years, governed the extensive hereditary dominions allotted to his father by Timur, in the partition of his vast empire; and had not only in himself cultivated, but patronized in others, the polite and liberal sciences. Mathematics and astronomy were, however, his favourite study; and it is more than probable, that a considerable portion of the work that now bears his name, was composed and arranged before his accession to the imperial throne, on which he sat only a few, and some of those, from the discords that prevailed in the royal family, unhappy, years. The extension of his dominion seemed principally applied, by this princely philosopher, towards enlarging the boundaries of

science. To this end, having summoned to Samarcand, his metropolis, from all parts of the world, those who were most skilful in the arts he loved, and having provided them with the most perfect instruments known in that age, he observed, in company with this illustrious assemblage of scholars, the phenomena of the heavens with the utmost accuracy; and, from observations then taken, formed the astronomical tables, sanctioned by his name, so celebrated over all the Eastern world, and called the Royal Ephemerides. He erected, on this occasion, a noble observatory; and, among a number of curious and uncommon instruments, a quadrant was constructed of such dimensions as are hardly conceivable; for Mr. Graves, who published a part of this work, informs us in his preface, that when he was at Constantinople, he was assured, by some Turkish astronomers of eminence and credibility, "Ulug Begium, præter alia instrumenta exactissima, quæ paraverat, quadrantem stupendæ molis construxisse, cujus radius altitudinem summæ fornicis templi Sanctæ Sophiæ adequaret;" i. e. that Ulug Beg, besides other most exact instruments, had constructed a quadrant of such a stupendous magnitude, that its radius, in length, equalled the height of the dome of St. Sophia. Whatever exaggeration there might have been in this report, Mr. Graves observes, that very large instruments were absolutely necessary to take the height of the pole, with such accuracy as he had done at Samarcand; for he makes it 39° 37′ 23″, whence we may infer his great precision in the rest of his observations. This book of the astronomical observations of Ulug Beg, is divided into four parts: the first treats of chronological history; the second, of geography, and the rising and setting of the stars in each country; the third, of the situation or position of the planets, of their longitudes and latitudes, and of all that is curious in the art of astronomy; the fourth shews the motions of the stars. Of these the chronological part was presented to the public, in 1650, by the learned and indefatigable Graves, and inserted afterwards in

the "Scriptores Græci Minores," under the title of "Epochæ Celebriores Chataiorum, Syro-Græcorum, Arabum, Persarum, Chorasmiorum;" all of them nations with whose history the present has a particular connection. The geographical tables, together with those of the celebrated Persian geographer, Nassir Eddin, appeared about the same period; and the tables of the longitude and latitude of the fixed stars were published at Oxford, by Dr. Hyde.

There is likewise another author, to whose learned and celebrated performance the succeeding portion of this work will be deeply indebted; I mean the History of the Arabian Dynasties, translated from Abulfaragius by Dr. Pocock, that great Eastern scholar, whom, Mr. Sale says, "no European has hitherto excelled, if equalled, in the knowledge of the Arabic tongue and writers." As I shall have frequent occasion to quote those dynasties, as well as the celebrated Abulghazi Bahadur, for the purpose of illustrating a period of history, and a portion of geography, very little known to those who have not made the Oriental histories their particular study, I must solicit the attention of the candid reader, to the following short account of two of the most illustrious ornaments of modern Asia.

Gregorius Abulfaragius, a native of Syria, and bishop of Aleppo, flourished in the thirteenth century, and published an historical work in Arabic, which may justly be called an epitome of universal history, from the creation to his own time. It consists of ten parts, and is divided into dynasties. Dr. Pocock published this work in 1663, with a Latin version, and a large supplement, containing a compendious sequel of that history with respect to the succession of the princes of the East. Mr. Bayle speaks in the highest terms of praise concerning that part which relates to the transactions of the Saracens and Mogul Tartars, and from that part principally will our extracts be made. This great historian was a singular advocate for judicial astrology; and, if we may believe his own assertion, an uncommon instance of the truth of it; for he affirmed, that he was

born when Jupiter and Saturn were in conjunction in the sign of Aquarius; that twenty years after they were again in conjunction in Libra, when he was made a bishop; that after twenty other years, these planets being in conjunction in Gemini, he was promoted to the dignity of primate; and after the space of another twenty years, they being once more in conjunction in Aquarius, he thought that the year of his death was arrived, and, according to the fatal presage, in that very year his life terminated, and he met death with cheerfulness and serenity.

Before we enter more particularly on that part of the Tartarian history, which is so intimately connected with that of India, (a period the most brilliant, and crowded with great events, of any in the Mohammedan æra,) it will also be necessary, that we should revert to the genealogical history of that nation, written in the Mogul language by Abulghazi Khan, above mentioned, and often cited, who was at once a descendant of the illustrious race whose actions he celebrates, and a powerful sovereign over a great portion of the country which his pen so accurately describes. "It is no novelty," says his editor, "in the East, to find kings among their authors, and the book before us is an instance of two, the father and the son, both Khans of Charasm." The former began, the latter finished it. Their immediate descendants at present bear imperial sway in their native country. The work itself is the only original of the kind of which we are in possession; and the mode of its introduction into Europe is not less curious than the book introduced. The manuscript was bought, about the close of the seventeenth century, by some Swedish officers, prisoners in Siberia, of a Tartar merchant who traded to Tobolski; and those officers, whose zeal for literature entitled them to a better fate, caused it to be translated into the Russian and other languages of Europe.

The royal author, in the course of the work, acquaints us with his reasons for commencing so laborious an undertaking, "which

he affirms to be the scarcity of genuine information on the subject; that no Khan before himself had taken the trouble to acquire the necessary materials, and much less to arrange them in historical order; that those materials had been chiefly collected from Fadlallah (whom he styles Khoja Rashid) and seventeen other respectable Mogul historians; and that his ardour in the prosecution of it was such, that, when labouring under a severe illness, (that severe illness which, in the end, proved fatal to him,) he continued, in the intervals of his disorder, to dictate to four secretaries, who attended for the purpose." This history is divided into nine parts, from the particular veneration which the Tartars are said to entertain for that number. The two first contain the history of the Moguls and Tartars, with an account of all their tribes, from Turk, the first founder of their nation, down to Gengis Khan; the third relates the life and actions of that great conqueror; the fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth, treat of his four sons, and their successors, in the various quarters of his vast empire; and the ninth contains a particular history of the Khans, our author's predecessors, who reigned over Charasm, from its first Uzbek conqueror Shah Bakht, to the death of Abulghazi himself, in A. D. 1663.

With the assistance of this author; of the History of the Dynasties, by Abulfaragius, particularly the ninth and tenth, and Pocock's Supplement to those dynasties; together with the additional aid of Abulfeda, Al Makin, and the later Byzantine historians, constantly compared, as we proceed, with the domestic Indian History of Ferishtah, I hope to be able to give a more complete and connected narration of the events relative to India, and the provinces of Asia immediately adjoining, in the middle centuries than has yet been exhibited in one production, to the eye of the public. Still farther to illustrate this interesting period of Tartar and Indian history, (for they are about this æra inseparably blended,) I shall call frequently to my aid that rich mine of Oriental science and history, La Bibliotheque

Orientale of M. D'Herbelot, the learned Ockley's History of the Saracens, and the numerous original authors occasionally referred to, in the three first volumes of the Modern Universal History, the substance of which was principally collected from manuscripts in the Bodleian library, and those of Dr. Hunt, late professor of Hebrew and Arabic, at Oxford, and is by far the most valuable portion of that voluminous work.

However eminently useful in illustrating the history, the work of Abulgazi will be still more serviceable in elucidating the geography of a country so little known, even to the literati of Europe, as Khowarazm, or Charasm. It was, however, in the twelfth century, the principal kingdom of a mighty empire, and its capital of the same name, now called Urgens, was the imperial residence of a dynasty of kings, highly celebrated in Asiatic history, of whom the last was Gelaleddin, whose dauntless bravery, displayed at the river Indus, filled Gengis Khan himself, his determined enemy, with admiration. It is the Chorasmia of Ptolemy and Herodotus; and from this region issued that formidable band of warriors, mentioned by the historians of the Crusades, under the name of Chorasmins, who gave the Christians, in the Holy Land, about 1242, that tremendous blow, from the shock of which they never afterwards could recover. By a comparison of this book with the Chorasmia of Abulfeda, as published by Graves, that perfect idea can alone be formed of its situation and divisions, which is so necessary to the right understanding of its history. Of Gengis Khan, the account given by Abulgazi is ample, satisfactory, and will be of important service; but that given of Timur is by no means so satisfactory; nor can we wonder, when it is considered, that the inflexible conqueror, enraged at its resistance, razed its metropolis to the ground, sowed it with barley, to prevent its again becoming formidable, and inflicted many unexampled severities on the princes, our author's progenitors.

There are also some other writers, historical and geographical, deserving of respectful notice, whose works will occasionally be cited for the purpose of elucidating this portion of the Indian history.

1. The very important history of Gengis Khan the Great, by M. De Le Croix, senior, being a professed compilation from genuine Oriental sources, particularly from FADLALLAH, a famous historian of the thirteenth century, vizier to Gazan Khan, one of the successors of that conqueror on the throne of Persia; from a Turkish historical writer of eminence, named ABULCAIR, who flourished in 1540, Mirkhond, Abulfeda, and other Persian and Arabian authors has, therefore, a title to be classed in this series of original Asiatic productions. 2. SHERIFFEDDIN'S Persian life of Timur Bec, or Beg, has been already mentioned with honour, as well as that in Arabic, by AHMED EBN ARABSHAH,* both of very superior merit, and both presented to the public in an European dress, the former by M. De Le Croix, junior, and the other by M. Vatier, professor of Arabic in the University of Paris, in 1658. Sheriffeddin wrote the life composed by him at the court and by the command of Sultan Ibrahim, the grandson of Timur, in whose reign he flourished, anno 1420, from actual memoirs preserved among the state papers in the imperial cabinet, and penned by Timur's Persian and Tartar secretaries, at the instant the great exploits recorded in them, were transacted. Ebn Arabshah, wrote his some years later, and far remote from that court, on the borders of Syria. Though ranked by Golius among the most elegant productions in Arabic, the author's distance from the scene of action, and his inveterate hatred of a hero, who had risen to glory on the ruin of the Arabian sovereignties, render him as partial a narrator of events on the one side, as Sheriffeddin, probably was, on the other. The line which I have already mentioned to have been pursued by me, of correcting both by the celebrated

* See of the present volume, p. 12, containing Sir William Jones's just criticism on the respective merits of these two writers.

Institutes of Timur himself, recently published in Arabic and English, by Professor White, whence may fairly be deduced the real principles by which he acted, will perhaps be applauded, as the safest and the best. 3. Ebn Haukal, also presented to the public, in an European dress, by our own indefatigable, but ill-requited, countryman, Sir William Ouseley. This book is of considerable importance, in point, not only of geographical illustration, but local history, for he flourished in the tenth century, as his learned editor fully proves, from the internal evidence of the work itself, and visited, in person, the beautiful *Sogd of Samarcand*, and many other celebrated places which his pen so accurately describes. 4. Al Edrisi, vulgarly called the Nubian geographer, who flourished, according to D'Herbelot, on the article, about the middle of the twelfth century, and though greatly obliged, as are Abulfeda himself, and almost all the other Eastern writers on geography of later date, to Ebn Haukal, yet has much that is original and interesting of his own, especially with respect to the Indian Peninsula and Guzzurat, of whose sovereign, the Balhara, at that time reigning, and of his court, he has given a splendid description. And, 5. The "Anciennes Relations," or Travels into India, of certain Mohammedans in the ninth century, edited by the learned Renaudot; as well as those of Marco Paulo into the same country, about the middle of the thirteenth century, and others that succeeded, will farther open to us the interior of that country, preparatory to the invasion of Timur, and the incursions of the predatory Uzbecs.

Before I conclude this short prefatory chapter, I feel an irresistible impulse, and deem it an indispensable duty, to remind the studious reader that, after all, it is not historical details, however authentic, chronological calculations, however exact, nor geographical researches, however profound, that should be the only objects regarded by those who may peruse the present portion of Asiatic annals, crowded with the most splendid scenes, fertile in the most

magnificent events, and at the same time, to those who peruse history with a proper disposition of mind, fraught with the sublimest instruction. In the extensive survey of Eastern kingdoms rapidly succeeding each other, unfolded to his contemplative eye in the present book, where the varied picture, in the first instance, exhibits to view the Greek empire betrayed either by the precipitancy, or the imbecility of its enervated princes, hurrying to decay; in the second, shews us the Arabian conquerors trampling on the ruins of the Syrian, Egyptian, and Persian monarchies, and these, lastly, in their turn, trampled upon by the still more ferocious tribes of Turks and Tartars, pouring down upon them from the heights of the Northern Asia; in this comprehensive prospect, I say, a striking and memorable example is held up to future ages, how little permanent must necessarily be the most ample acquisition of territory and subjects, retained alone by the *sword* that gained them, and where a wise and liberal system of jurisprudence is wanting to regulate the counselling head, and direct the executive arm. The military maxims which alone swayed the conduct of these despotic and sanguinary dynasties of fugitive princes, might indeed inspire terror into their trembling subjects, but could never secure their attachment; there existed between them no reciprocity of kindness; there was no protection afforded on the one part, to claim the just tribute of obedience on the other; the subject was bound to the prince, whose sceptre was of iron, by no connecting tie of grateful affection; in their habits and manners too, they were as widely at variance, as in their religion; and the next invader was received with equal indifference as the former, by the abject slave who, in every successive revolution that rolled around him the storm of devastating war, experienced no amelioration of his hard lot, but, on the contrary, often had his chains more closely rivetted by the insulting victor. But while, without astonishment, we behold the ephemeral kingdoms of the East, suddenly raised to the highest point of power and grandeur, on a

far different basis from the only true one, viz. WISDOM IN THE PRINCE, AND VIRTUE IN THE PEOPLE, rushing headlong to destruction, and mourn over the incessant massacre of the human race, committed by the insane fury of ambition, with what mingled indignation and horror must we be filled, at observing the most unheard of atrocities practised, under the abused name, and by the pretended sanction, of RELIGION. Than the four succeeding centuries, the annals of the world do not display a more dark and dreadful series of perfidy, spoliation, and murder; nor does the history of the human heart exhibit any more shocking instances of rooted depravity, and callous insensibility, than are continually exemplified in the conduct of the Mussulman perpetrators of those nefarious transactions. The virtuous and reflecting mind, revolting from these abominable scenes of despotism, and superstition, retires in disgust within itself, and with increased satisfaction contemplates the blessings enjoyed under a government immutably founded on the adamantine basis of virtue and liberty, possessing the noblest code of equity, and irradiated by the beams of the purest religion.

CHAPTER II.

Birth of MOHAMMED.—*State of the Greek Empire, and of Christianity, at that Period.—Rapid Sketch of the Character and early Progress of the Arms and Religion of that Impostor.—The Arabian Generals invade Persia, in their Progress towards the Indian Frontier.—Battle of Cadesia.—Plunder of Ctesiphon.—Death of* YESDEGIRD, *the last Monarch of the Sassanian Dynasty.—The Mussulman Conquerors pass the Oxus, and subjugate Mawralnahr, or Transoxiana.—Geographical Sketch of Mawralnahr.—Concise History of the Taherian, the Soffarian, and Sammanian Dynasties.—The Dynasty of* GAZNA.—ABISTAGI.—SUBUCTAGI.—*The latter ravages the Frontiers of India, but soothed by the Submission and Presents of* JEIPAL, *the Rajah of Lahore, enters into a Treaty with him.—The Treaty violated by* JEIPAL.—SUBUCTAGI *incensed thereat attacks, and in a great Battle defeats, the confederate Princes of* HINDOSTAN; *he then renews his former Depredations, and returns, loaded with immense Wealth, to* GAZNA.

CONCERNING the exact year in which Mohammed was born, there have been great disputes, both among Mussulman and Christian divines. It is not a circumstance of any very material importance, as it is from his *flight* from Mecca, and not from his *birth*, that the celebrated Arabian epoch commences. In fixing that event, as I have done in a preceding page, to A. D. 578, as well as invariably writing his name *Mohammed*, I have adhered strictly to the text of Abulfeda,* the most celebrated and accurate of his numerous biographers. The details of his genealogy and the particular events of the early life of

* Vide Ismael Abulfeda de Vitâ Mohammedis, p. 1; edit. Gagnier, Oxon. 1723.

the impostor, are equally foreign to this history. They have been sufficiently blazoned by others. Let us proceed to considerations of more interest and moment; the state, at this period, of that religion which the new doctrines were intended to supersede, and of that mighty empire which the Mohammedan arms eventually subverted.

Amidst the daring innovations that defiled, and the endless schisms that at this important crisis convulsed, the Greek church, the genuine religion of Christ glimmered in the East but with a faint ray. At the same time, shaken to its very foundations, equally by foreign assault and domestic distractions, the power of the Cæsars was hastening rapidly to extinction. The jealous and embittered Jew had long beholden, with almost frantic impatience, the religion of the despised Galilean, in consequence of the conversion of Constantine, decorated with all the splendours, and supported by all the energies of imperial authority; and was willing heartily to join in any project for the utter extirpation of so detested a code, that did not offer gross violence to the sublime sanctity of his own. The Persian had marked with horror the sacrilegious outrages committed by the intolerant zeal of the victorious Christian against the altar of the Solar Fire, and the Pagan world in general, mourned over, and vowed revenge for, their mutilated gods and demolished temples. To unadulterated Christianity, there remained but few friends any where, and still its most inveterate enemies existed in its own bosom, those numerous sectarians, those fanciful expositors, those wilful pervertors of the sacred text, who under the name of Arians, Sabellians, Jacobites, Nestorians, Manichæans, and Eutychians, had publicly broached those nefarious doctrines, that excited the extreme sorrow of all the good, and provoked the contempt and derision of all the impious. No period, therefore, could be more favourable than the present, to the views of an artful and daring innovator, fraught with genius, to fabricate a new religion, and armed at the same time with a resistless sword to compel the acceptance of it. Amidst

the innumerable histories already in existence of Mohammed and Mohammedism, a concise sketch from my pen, prefatory to the narrative of the Moslem invasions of India, of that false prophet's character, his views, and incipient progress, will I presume, be deemed amply sufficient.

Without the advantage of science and education, yet possessing distinguished natural talents and strong intellectual endowments, this prince of impostors, this singular compound of vice and fanaticism, whose juvenile years were passed in mercantile occupation, and who, in that employ had repeatedly travelled through Palestine, Syria, and visited most of the great commercial cities in that part of Asia, had early acquired, on the great theatre of active life, a species of wisdom far superior to what books could have taught him, or the ablest masters of Asia have instilled. He seems also, to have inherited from nature, an ardent enthusiastic spirit, and an undaunted courage to accomplish whatever he cautiously but resolutely projected. In the course of his travels and of considerable dealings with merchants of other countries and religions, Mohammed had obtained so deep an insight into mankind, and had taken such a comprehensive view of their religious prejudices and political opinions, as rendered him in a peculiar manner qualified for the arduous undertaking in which he had determined to embark. By an union, however forced and unnatural, in one comprehensive code of the leading principles and tenets of all the heretical sects among Jews, and Christians, by a reverential acknowledgment of the high prophetic office and character of Moses and Christ, by an artful selection and insertion, in various parts of that code, of many of the sublimest passages contained in the sacred volumes of those people; by affecting, at the same time, strenuously to inculcate as the fundamental basis of his religion, the doctrine of the UNITY OF GOD, and yet by luxurious descriptions of a paradise, artfully accommodated to the licentious conceptions of the Eastern sensualist, insidiously

attempting to win over to his scheme the Pagan idolater, by these combined efforts, he hoped to collect, and in a short time he did collect under the ample banners of Mohammedism, multitudes of every varying creed from the remotest regions of Asia. For those incorrigible sinners who obstinately rejected its proffers and resisted its allurements, the sword of temporal vengeance was wide unsheathed, and offended Heaven, by the voice of its chosen prophet, thundered out their damnation in the most dreadful anathemas. Being elevated to sudden independence, by an union with one of the noblest and richest families of Mecca, the hitherto repressed flame of ambition and fanaticism, his leading characteristics, at once blazed out, and though the false prophet himself was so utterly illiterate, that he could neither read nor write, yet by the secret assistance, as has been fully proved, of two eminently learned persons, his tools in this dark business, the one named Abdollah, an apostate Jew, a native of Persia, well versed in the abstrusest mysteries of the Talmud, and the other styled by Christian writers, Sergius, a Nestorian monk, intimately acquainted with all the heresies and divisions at that time prevalent in the Christian world; with this aid he composed that inconsistent but elegant jargon of discordant doctrines, denominated the Coran; a work which, with shameless effrontery, he affirmed, was penned by the finger of God, and brought, in detached portions, from the golden table, deposited, for eternal ages, by his throne in the highest heaven.* The better to veil his deep-laid plot, against the liberty of his country and the government of Asia, for a considerable time previous to the public avowal of his apostolic mission, he affected the seclusion and austerity of the ancient prophets, and retired from all intercourse with human society, to the gloom of a cavern on Mount Hara, about a league from Mecca, in the sacred silence of that solitude to meditate on

* Consult Sale's Preliminary Discourse to his Translation of the Coran, Vol. I. page 85.

and mature the mighty project of glory and aggrandizement. The subsequent exploits of this great but wicked man, have, as before remarked, been the theme of so many able pens; his fraudful and impudentim postures as a *theologue*, his sagacious plans as a *politician*, and his brilliant feats as a *warrior*, from the æra of that retirement, or rather, of his compelled flight from Mecca, denominated by Arabian writers, the HEGIRA, and which it is of material importance the reader should bear in recollection, took place, according to the most correct calculations of their chronologers, on the 16th of July, A. D.* 622, to his decease ten years after, or in A. D. 632,† have been so repeatedly detailed, and in such masterly strains of eloquence, by Christian writers of the most distinguished rank and talents, that it is entirely unnecessary for me to tread over again the beaten ground of his triumphs, and those of his immediate successors, on the plains of Asia and Afric. Those that are directly or collaterally connected with India have alone, any claim to consideration in this history, and they open, indeed, a vast and varied field for our contemplation. Of the transactions of the Arabians in that secluded region, I shall endeavour to sketch the great outline, and delineate the striking features only, leaving the disgusting minutiæ of innumerable inferior battles and massacres to be recorded by those who may take more delight than myself, in enumerating the sanguinary atrocities of the most barbarous despots, in the whole catalogue of Asiatic conquerors.

The intimate connection of India with Persia, or rather the compelled dependence, for a series of ages, under the Parthian and Sassanian dynasties, of the former on the latter empire, renders it necessary, in the survey which we are about to take of the Mohammedan conquests in the more eastern districts of Asia, for their triumphs in the South only collaterally affected India, that the

* See Ismael Abulfeda in Vitâ Mohammed, cap. xxii. p. 45; and Ulug Beg's Epochæ Celebriores, p. 8. † Ismael Abulfeda, cap. lxii. p. 136.

reader's eye should be directed to the earliest exploits of their generals in Iran, so immediately introductory to their achievements on the plains of India. The vigour in arms and counsel, of the great Chosru Parviz, had succeeded in partly restoring that empire to its ancient height of power and grandeur; but the subsequent and repeated attacks of Heraclius had again shaken it to its very centre, and eventually produced the dethronement and murder of that sovereign, by the parricidal arm of his son Siroes. A rapid succession of princes, pusillanimously weak, or desperately wicked, had succeeded Chosru on that throne, till the first invasion of it by the Arabs, which, though generally assigned to a later period, in the caliphate of Omar, certainly took place in the first year of Abubeker, the successor of Mohammed. The fertile and beautiful domains not less than the enormous accumulated wealth of the Persian monarchs, stimulated the needy wanderers of the Arabian desart, thus early to attempt the subjugation of that country; at the same time the Sabian idolatries, to which both prince and people were so grossly addicted, excited their indignation, and inflamed their ardour to banish from the earth, the celebration of its splendid, but nefarious rites. Irak, or Assyria, was a part of that vast empire nearest their own territory, and was first assailed. The march of the Arabians was rapid and triumphant, till they reached the Euphrates, where it was found necessary to throw a bridge over that river, in order to attack the Persian army encamped in the neighbourhood of Babylon; but the vigilance of Ferokhzad, the Persian general, frustrated their efforts, by suddenly attacking the Arab troops that guarded it, and setting fire to the vessels that composed it. The invaders, intimidated by this act of vigour, began a cautious retreat; in that retreat, their supplies of provision were cut off; the Persian cavalry attacked them on all sides; and they were put to a total rout.* The defeated army returned to the frontiers of Syria,

* Mirkhond in Texeira, p. 97. D'Herbelot, Article Touran Dokht.

where they were met by powerful reinforcements, and after a short interval, returned to the field with rekindled ardour and spirit. In this second attack, they were opposed by a Persian nobleman of high rank, named Alharzaman, at the head of a still more formidable army; but the Persian troops were unable to stand before the impetuous onset of the Mussulman army, stung with the shame of recent defeat, and filled with holy indignation against the worshippers of fire. In the end, the former were utterly routed, and Alharzaman himself, and the greater part of his troops, in their precipitate flight, were cut to pieces

At this period, the Persians owned for their sovereign a queen named Arzema Dokht, who, however qualified, by abilities beyond the common lot of her sex, for the internal controul of the empire, could not be supposed to possess that active martial genius which the present exigency of public affairs required. The very name of a woman governing, seemed to imply irresolution and debility; the majesty of the throne, and the glory of the temple were gradually expiring; and therefore to restore the fading lustre of both, Arzema was, by the unanimous voice of the nation, deposed, and a grandson of Chosroes, though quite a youth, invested with the tiara.

Yezdegerd, the last sovereign of that illustrious dynasty, which had now weilded the imperial sceptre for nearly four hundred years, ascended the throne, when only fifteen years old, and according to Alwakidi, and the most esteemed chronologers of Asiatic events, consulted by Ockley, about the close of the same year in which Abubeker succeeded to that, which on the ruins of the Arabian liberty and government, but without assuming a regal diadem, Mohammed had erected at Mecca.* In consequence of the inexperienced

* Consult Ockley's Hist. of the Saracens, Vol. I. p. 113, and Eutychii Annales, Vol. II. p. 256. The famous æra of Yezdegerd commenced, according to Ockley, who has, in this place, corrected an anachronism in both Abulfaragius and Al Makin, in the eleventh year of the Hegira, and on the 16th of that very month, on the 7th

age of Yezdegerd, the future conduct of the war was committed to a general of high renown, and of as celebrated a name, if it were not a name common to all the more illustrious warriors of Persia, from the time of the great Cyrus, ROSTAM. Rostam, if not wholly deserving of that distinguished appellation, as a conqueror, seems to have done all, notwithstanding some insinuations of Oriental writers to the contrary, that in the languishing debilitated state of that empire, could be effected. Collecting together an army of one hundred and twenty thousand men, he met the enemy, whose number amounted to only thirty thousand men, but men whose sinews, like their sabres, were steel, and headed by Saad, a general to whom fear was unknown, and gave them battle, on the vast plains of Cadesia, a city bordering on the desert of Irak, where was maintained for three successive days, one of the most prolonged and bloody conflicts that was ever witnessed in Asia, or ever decided the doom of a great empire.

In the course of those three days, sixty thousand Persians are said by Al Makin, who is unusually minute in his account of this battle, to have perished by the sabres of the Arabians; the latter confess, that not less than seven thousand five hundred of the true believers were slain in this decisive engagement.* The battle of Cadesia put them in possession of the whole of the important province of Irak; and the city of Bassora, immediately erected on the western bank of the great river formed by the junction of the Tigris and Euphrates, at once secured its dependence, and commanded its commerce.†

Animated, rather than satiated with the survey of the immense

of which, the impostor himself died, viz. the 16th of June, A. D. 632, in which Abubeker began his short reign of only two years. But the event of the first Arabian invasion of Persian Irak, is by the two Oriental historians last mentioned, placed two years later, or in A. D. 634, and as observed in the text, under the caliphate of Omar.

* Al Makin, Hist. Saracen. p. 25. † Ibid. p. 27.

booty already acquired by their lawless and unprovoked irruption, after a short period of necessary repose, and after having been again re-inforced by fresh battalions, the holy banditti pressed forward with all the celerity, inspired by the mingled impulse of enthusiasm and avarice, to Ctesiphon, or as the Orientals term it, Al Madayn, the noble, the unrivalled, the yet unconquered capital of Persia. Their name and barbarities had already diffused such terror through all its provinces, so abject was the spirit, and of so venal a stamp the patriotism of the governors of the intermediate cities and forts, that scarcely a lance was raised, or an arrow hurled to oppose their desolating progress through the heart of that beautiful country. When this devouring army of human locusts reached Ctesiphon, they found that the royal family, apprized of their approach, and struck with horror and dismay, had fled with the greatest part of the imperial treasures, from its splendid palace, to the rugged recesses of the Median mountains; nor did the valiant and wealthy citizens that guarded its gates, give them that ready admittance, which they had promised to themselves, within its lofty walls. Unskilled in the arts of defence, their opposition was fruitless, and only served as an excuse to the irritated soldiers, when by an united and vigorous assault they had carried the ramparts, to spread wider the torrent of destruction, and die their sabres deeper in Persian blood. It is impossible to describe the infinite wealth of every various kind which recompensed the warlike toils of the victors, on the capture of this vast and magnificent metropolis; the quantity of gold and silver in bullion and coined money, which Yezdegerd was unable to transport into Media; the costly furniture, rich carpets, and beautiful tapestry, displaying the most brilliant dies, and the most elaborate efforts of the looms of India and Persia; cabinets of all the precious woods; curious vases of agate and crystal, studded with gems, found in the palace of the Great King, and the rich silks and other objects of barter that crowded the overflowing warehouses of

the merchants. In short, the whole wealth of the monarch and the nobility centered there, and enriched the victors beyond all the limits of calculation.*

Such are the accounts of the Arabian writers, and we shall be little inclined to doubt their verity, if we, on the other hand, turn to the page of D'Herbelot, and peruse what is there extracted by that author, from Mirkhond and other native Persian historians, of the immense sums laid out upon, as well as treasured up, in the vaults of the palace by Chosru, surnamed Parviz, the magnificent predecessor of Yezdegerd, who adorned it with all the spoils of his conquests in Egypt, Syria, and the islands of the Mediterranean. This ostentatious monarch is said, to have disposed the upper part of this palace in the form of a throne, elevated aloft on many thousand columns of silver, from which he gave public audience to the ambassadors that flocked to Ctesiphon from the most distant regions. The concave dome above was decorated with a thousand globes of

* Ismael Abulfedæ Annales Muslemicæ, p. 69; et Al Makin, Hist. Saracen. p. 26. For the reader's gratification, I insert below the account of the latter, which probably contains no exaggerated detail of the pomp and splendour of the Persian sovereigns, and certainly will impress him with no contemptible idea of the Persian artists and manufacturers.

Eodem hoc anno occupavit Saadus Medajinam Cosroæ, transiitque ipse et Muslimi Madajinam, et potiti sunt omnibus et opibus thesauris Cosroæ: dicunturque invenisse millies mille millia aureorum: inveneruntque domum in qua corbes erant vestiti plumbo, in quibus vasa erant aurea et argentea. Invenerunt et domum plenum camphora, quam Muslimi rati sal esse, in fermento usurparunt, unde amarus erat panis. Invenerunt et coronam Cosroæ, et vestimenta ejus auro intexta, et gemmis plumata: item loricas Cosroæ, et galeas ejus: nec non velum portici; ex quo à Saïdo lacerato, exierunt mille drachmarum millia: valebat autem quæque drachma 10 stateres. Invenerunt et tapetum sericum 60 cubitos longum, et totidem latum; in quo figuræ et gemmæ erant instar florum: in margine ejus tanquam terra erat, consita herbis et plantis, ad modum herbarum terræ, tempore veris, facta gemmis, auro, atque argento. Cumque ad Omarem pervenissent, discidit eam, atque distribuit Muslimis: contigitque Ali pars, quam vendidit viginti millibus; neque ea tamen erat ex optimis.

gold, wherein all the planets, and great constellations, were seen to perform their natural revolutions; all the walls of this sumptuous place being covered with tapestry, wrought with gold flowers, and enriched with pearls and other precious stones. Underneath the palace he had an hundred vaults filled with treasure; and when the tyrant was, in consequence of his extortions and cruelty deposed, he was confined in one of those vaults, that he might continually contemplate the cause of his ruin, and, while bending under the weight of golden chains, might acknowledge how inadequate to confer happiness, or assuage despair, were the accumulated treasures of a rifled world.*

After the sack and plunder of Al Madayn, the victorious army pursued their march into the interior provinces, where the governors, terrified by their numbers and the fate of their capital, every where opened the gates of the cities and castles, and many of them readily consented to save their lives and property, by embracing the Mohammedan religion. Of this short and simple creed, required to be confessed and adhered to—"THERE IS ONLY ONE GOD; AND MOHAMMED IS THE APOSTLE OF GOD;" of this holy sentence, or apothegm, which immediately constituted him who pronounced it a member of the Mohammedan church, converted the most detested enemy into the firmest friend, and exalted the meanest slave to the rank of a brother, the former part contained a truth already deeply engraved on the heart of the better educated among the Persians, who, under the symbol of FIRE, worshipped none other than the only living and true God, *that answereth by fire;* in respect to the axiom contained in the latter portion of that sentence, a rational persuasion, at least, of its verity, might arise in any cool dispassionate mind, that, ignorant of the insidious and fraudful means by which the impostor had first propagated his doctrines, deliberately reflected on the sudden and wide diffusion of his faith, and the

* See D'Herbelot, Bibliotheque Orient. Art. Khosru ben Hormouz.

astonishing and almost miraculous success of the Mussulman arms. The concise, yet energetic simplicity of this creed, inculcating solely a firm belief in the first great principle of natural religion, and the sanctity of the character that promulged it, contributed, not less than the sword by which it was enforced, to render it embraced, with little reluctance, by those philosophic minds that despised the popular worship of images, and observed the venal prostitution of the idolatrous priests, and the sanguinary, though often splendid, rites that polluted the pagan temples. In this degraded state of all the ancient religions of Asia, the times seemed to require, the expanding faculties of the human mind, to demand the public avowal of a religious code, at least more enlightened than the blind and bloody Pagan system, which still delighted in the barbarity of human victims, agonizing on the altars of the Persian Mithra, and the Indian Seeva!

Mohammed's penetrating eye saw this, and his daring genius created and promulgated that code. Though scarcely a ray of genuine Christianity emaned through the gross darkness that clouds the Coran, yet, as it professed a veneration for the Hebrew patriarchs, and exalts on high the prophetic character of Christ, neither Jews nor Christians were greatly alarmed at the first propagation of its heterogeneous dogmas. By the Pagans, the new code was received with avidity; nor, replete as it was, with sounding promises of high rewards in this life, and liberal in its proffers of infinitely greater, in that which is to succeed, in a Paradise well understood and well relished by the luxurious progeny of Asia, can it excite wonder, that both in Persia and India, Islamism soon obtained a multitude of proselytes. When once obtained, too, the fidelity and attachment of those proselytes were inviolably secured, since inevitable death, temporal and eternal, is the dreadful doom, denounced by the Coran against those who relapse into their pristine error. One of the most illustrious of its converts at this period was

Harmozan, a Persian nobleman, who governed the province of Chuzestan, the ancient Susiana, which he for some time vigorously defended against the invaders; but this satrap, in the end was conquered, sent prisoner to Mecca to do homage to Omar, converted, and received an ample stipend from the caliph, in reward of that conversion. After the capture of Susa, a noble, but not in these times, an imperial, city, Hamadan, Ispahan, what *was* Persepolis, and all the other renowned cities and palaces of the great SHAHINSHAH, or *king of kings,* successively became the prey of the victors. The stupendous ruins of Istakar impressed them with no awe; nor were the tombs of the Chosroes sacred from their ravages.*

In the mean time, the unfortunate Yezdegerd was collecting together in Media, the scattered remains of the Persian army; the Magi sounded their sacred trumpets in the ancient seat of the religion of Zerdusht;† and the imperial banners, displayed on the surrounding eminences, summoned the youth of Persia to the instant defence of all that remained to them venerable in the sacred, or valuable in the civil institutions of their valiant, forefathers. The struggle was made with vigour and enthusiasm; but the fatal termination of the battle of Julula, fought exactly nine months after the reduction of Al Madayen, too manifestly declared, that the SUN of Persia was for ever set. Yezdegerd, who though still young, had in that battle, performed the duties of a great king and a brave commander, after its inglorious issue, continued his flight, together with the royal family, first to Parthia, whence, after a short stay, not thinking himself secure even there, from the pursuing foe, he pressed on to the great range of mountains that rise on the most

* Abulfedæ Annal. Moslem, Tom. I. p. 249, ad Annum Hegiræ 21, A. D. 641.

† It was in a cavern of the Median mountains, that Zerdusht celebrated the first rites of his religion. See Porphyry De Antro Nympharum, p. 256. See, also, Indian Antiquities, on this interesting subject, Vol. II. p. 298; first edition.

northern frontiers of his dominion. The province of Fargana, on the distant Jaxartes, next received the fugitive monarch; here he was received by the Scythian sovereign, named Tarkhan, with respect and hospitality, and hence he solicited succours of the sovereigns of Turkestan and Sogdiana, who, touched with compassion, at the misfortunes of so great a prince, prepared an army to reinstate him on the throne of his ancestors. He is even asserted by M. De Guignes, from his Oriental authorities, to have sent a solemn embassy to the remote, but at that time powerful, emperor of China, stating his calamities, and imploring his assistance.* But while Yezdegerd was supplicating foreign aid, some of his more zealous and faithful subjects at home, deriving resolution from despair, had united from various and distant quarters at Nehavend, a city of Farsistan, advantageously situated on a hill, fourteen parasangs south of Hamadan, to the amount of one hundred and fifty thousand fighting men, and were determined to make one grand and final effort to save from utter extinction the sacred flame, and from irretrievable ruin the sinking empire. The battle of Nehavend, is an event greatly celebrated in the annals of the Arabs. It proved extremely obstinate and bloody, and lasted, according to Al Makin, for *three* successive days, on the last of which the Moslems proved completely victorious, and drove their antagonists with immense slaughter from the last field, in which the Persians were ever able to make head against their cruel despoilers.† Al Nooman, who commanded the Mohammedan army, one of their bravest generals, and (what was

* De Guignes Hist. des Huns, Tom. I. p. 64.

† Al Makin, Hist. Saracen. p. 29. The circumstance of another Persian engagement like that of Cadesia, lasting *three days*, induces me to cite the original passage, that I may not appear to have confounded the events:

Hoc anno gestum est bellum Nahawendicum, cum enim ibi convenissent Persæ, accessit ad eos Nuamanus, filius Macrani, cum magno Muslimorum exercitu, qui, commisso prælio, intra TRIDUUM est occisus, et successit ei Hodaifas, filius Jamani. Tandem vicerunt Muslimi, et Infideles in fugam versi sunt, multis eorum occisis.

then esteemed more honourable than all warlike laurels) A COMPANION OF THE PROPHET, fell in this action, but his post was quickly and ably filled by Hodaifa Ebn Yaman, who following up this important and decisive blow, made all Persia bow to the Saracen yoke, except the two remote dependent provinces of Kerman and Sejestan, whose governors preserved their loyalty unshaken, and for a series of years held out against all the forces sent against them, giving occasional protection to their persecuted sovereign, and regularly remitting to him their respective revenues; but these also were in the end compelled submissively to bend before the growing power of that mighty colossus, whose gigantic shadow already darkened the half of Asia.

To conclude the mournful narrative of royal woe; Yezdegerd with the few nobles and a part of the army that still remained attached to his cause, had retired into Chorasan, and kept up for many years, in that remote province, the parade of a court, and the shadow of imperial grandeur. He was, however, little better than a vassal among those Sogdian and Turkish tribes, the descendants of the Massagetæ, who had ever been the sworn enemies of the Persian empire. But the degraded and exiled state of Yezdegerd had disarmed their fury, and they afforded protection where they could no longer injure or insult. The Arab invaders of Persia were also in too great strength to be attacked, either with the view of replacing Yezdegerd on the throne, or of seizing the kingdom for themselves. In one of the few cities that yet remained to him, called Meru al Roud, or *Meru on the river*, i. e. the Oxus, to distinguish it from another Meru in the same province of Chorasan, a formidable insurrection broke out, headed by the governor himself, and the rebels had called in a neighbouring tribe of Turks to support them in their opposition to the regal authority; so that when Yezdegerd, with his small army arrived to suppress the insurgents, he found the swords of his new but perfidious allies, turned against him in a battle in

which he was defeated, and that army put to a total rout. This is one account of the Arabian historians, but by others it is recorded,* that by repeated solicitation, he at length prevailed on the king of Turkestan to accompany him at the head of a large army, for the recovery of the throne of Persia; that in their progress towards Persia, his own army having considerably increased in numbers, Yezdegerd thought himself sufficiently powerful to act without the assistance of a sovereign whose views he secretly suspected, and sought some frivolous pretext to dismiss the auxiliaries, which so enraged the Turkish king, that incited by an ungrateful traitor of the name of Mahwa, who had formerly been a servant of Yezdegerd, he fell with his whole force upon the Persians, entirely defeated them, and compelled the king to seek his safety in precipitate flight. In that flight, he arrived faint and exhausted with fatigue, on the banks of a river, where he found a fisherman, or as some authors have it, a miller, with his boat, to whom, in the anguish of his soul, he offered his rings, his bracelets, and other regal ornaments, for that immediate transportation which could alone save him from the fury of the pursuing foe. While the unfeeling brute hesitated to ferry him over, because his exact fare in as many pieces of current silver was not offered to him, the Turkish cavalry galloped up, and being too well acquainted with his person, with their scymeters immediately dispatched the unhappy monarch, who thus, like the unfortunate Darius, prematurely perished by the hands of vulgar assassins, in the 35th year of his age, and in the nineteenth of his *reign*, if a long succession of the most disastrous incidents that ever fell to the lot of man, may be thus denominated.†

This event is fixed by Al Makin and Abulfeda, to the thirty-first

* Both accounts are given by Abulfeda, Annales Muslemici, Tom. I. p. 267, ad annum Hegiræ 31.

† Ockley's History of the Saracens, Vol. I. p. 329, ubi supra.

year of the Hegira, or A. D. 651, in which very year, by the command of the new caliph Osman, third in succession to Mohammed, Abdallah Ebn Omar, governor of Bassora, and Said Ebn Al As, by different routes penetrated and conquered Chorasan itself, Osman having, to excite a spirit of emulation in those generals, promised the government of that noble province, or rather extensive kingdom, the ancient Bactria, as the reward of his valour, who should first enter and subdue it. The prize was won by Abdallah, who never checked his impetuous career till, as Al Makin expresses himself, *he had drank out of the river of Balkh*,* its capital, washed by a branch of the Oxus. Thus in the short period of thirty-one years, were the vast empires of Persia, of Egypt, and Syria, in addition to the three Arabias, subjugated to the successors of the miserable Exile, who at that short distance of time, had with such difficulty escaped with life from his native city of Mecca. But beyond the Oxus, lay the immensely rich and flourishing kingdom of Mawralnahr literally the *country beyond the river*, and as the sense is correctly conveyed by the less grating word Transoxiana, I shall in general use that classic term in the very frequent mention which must be made of it in these pages. Arabian ambition could not rest satisfied unless Transoxiana, also, were desolated by the scourge of its arms, nor its avarice appeased without the plunder of its unbounded wealth.

Of the magnitude and importance of the country thus denominated, we shall best be able to form an accurate judgment, by tracing its geographical outlines, and we shall most correctly perform that task, by consulting the Oriental geographers themselves. Transoxiana properly speaking, signifies the vast tract of country lying between the Oxus or Gihon, and the ancient Jaxartes, the modern Sihun, or Sir, and stretches from 34 to 44 degrees of north latitude,

* Al Makin, Historia Saracenica, p. 37; and Abulfedæ Annal. Muslem. in loco ante citat.

and from 92 to 107 degrees of longitude, comprehending a square of nearly 600 miles. On the north it is bounded by the great empire of Turkestan, or ancient Scythia; by the kingdom of Tibet on the east; India and Persia form its southern, and Charazm its western frontier. It is the Turan of the Persian, and the Sogdiana of the classical, geographers, and is at present more generally known to us by the name of Great Bokharia; though that kingdom, as now governed by its own Uzbek khans, is still more extensive than ever was Mawaralnahr, properly so called, and comprehends, within its expanded limits, at once the Sogdiana and Bactriana of the ancients. In fact also, these provinces, conjointly formed the empire of the great Samanian dynasty, whose exploits we are shortly about to notice, as that from which germinated the formidable race of Gaznavide conquerors of India. The reader has already been presented with a description of the fertile and beautiful province of Bactriana or Chorasan; and Sogdiana is blest with nearly the same delicious climate, romantic aspect, and luxurious productions; the lofty mountains being clothed with woods or rich in minerals, the vallies abundant in every species of grain and pasturage, that nourish innumerable herds of the finest cattle; and the noble rivers swarming with various kinds of fish of the most excellent flavour. The sky is perpetually serene, the greatest part of this region lying in the same latitude with Italy, though from its great elevation, the air is more cold and bracing to the less enervated inhabitant. Its classical appellation is still retained, in that of the beautiful *valley of Sogd*, one of the paradises of the Asiatics, and the favourite theme of every Oriental muse. It is, says Sir William Jones, an hundred and twenty miles in length, sixty in breadth, and a large river, named Cai, rolls through it, which branches into a thousand clear streams, that water the gardens and cultivated lands, with which the whole of the valley is covered.* In the centre of this valley, and according to Ebn

* Description of Asia, prefixed to Nader Shah, p. 23.

Haukal*, on the southern bank of the river, stands the noble city of Samarcand, the ancient Maracanda, and said to have been built by Alexander the Great, when he pursued hither the vanquished and flying Bactrians. Samarcand, according to Abulfeda's tables, is situated in latitude 40°, and in longitude 89;† its true latitude, however, from more correct observation, is known to be 41° 20′, and its longitude 95°, and was the ancient imperial residence of the kings of Mawaralnahr, till the Samanian family removed the court to Bokhara. It is represented by Ebn Haukal, as having a castle of great strength, a sumptuous mosque, splendid palaces, shaded with trees of unfading verdure, spacious streets, and bazars crowded with the richest merchandize of the East; its whole circuit to a vast extent being encompassed with a deep ditch and lofty walls, with towers ranging at equal distances, and fortified with gates of iron.‡ But the period of that traveller's visit to Samarcand, was not the æra of its proudest glory. In the reign of Timur, who made it the capital of his immense empire, we shall again have occasion to speak of its magnificence.

At the distance of seven days journey from Samarcand, we approach the city of Bokhara, the residence of the sovereign in our author's time, encompassed for many miles with groves, gardens,

* See Ebn Haukal's Geography by Sir W. Ouseley, p. 252. This eminent Arabian geographer, who in the tenth century visited this city, and many others in the Higher Asia, which he describes, has given a very minute and interesting description of the famous *Soghd of Samarcand*, as it was in his day, which may now be read by the curious reader in his native tongue. Abulfeda, and all the preceding writers in geography, have borrowed largely from this excellent work, and Sir William has very truly remarked, that he who has made copious extracts from the former, has imperceptibly transcribed no inconsiderable portion of Ebn Haukal. The literary world are infinitely obliged to him for the laudable and laborious work of translating him.

† Chorasmiæ et Mawaralnahræ Descriptio, ex Tabulis Abulfedæ, p. 30; edit. Graves, 1750.

‡ Ebn Haukal, p. 212, 213.

and orchards; and watered by the same clear and beautiful river that meanders amid the pastures and bowers of Samarcand. Its latitude, as given in the tables of Abulfeda,* is 39° 20′, the longitude 70° 50′; the former is nearly correct, but the latter is very erroneous, it being in reality no more than 65° 50′. The castle, with its ramparts, in which the Samanian princes resided, its grand mosque and celebrated bazar, the centre of the trade of the Higher Asia, are particularly noticed by Ebn Haukal.† Bokhara being situated, like Samarcand, on a plain, and consequently more easily accessible to an invading enemy, was inclosed within two strong walls, flanked with bastions; the inner wall had seven gates, the outer had twelve, and the walls themselves, were no doubt, of height and magnitude proportioned to the dignity and importance of the place.

Next to Samarcand and Bokhara, the city of most importance is Fargana, placed by Abulfeda‡ in latitude 42° 20′, the capital of an ample and fertile province of the same name, containing numerous towns and villages.§ It is mentioned as situated on a plain, by the side of a river, and as possessing the usual appendages of great Eastern cities, the palace for the governor, the castle for defence, the mosque for religion, and fortified walls of great extent; groves of the loveliest verdure, and gardens of the sweetest fragrance. This was the city to which, we have seen in a preceding page, the ill-fated Yezdegerd fled for protection from his pursuing Arabian foe; and it is of honourable record as having been the birth place of the celebrated astronomer who from it bears the name of Alfargani. Fargana abounds with the richest mineral productions, gold, silver, copper, and other ores. Torquoise stones and sal-ammoniac are also found in its mountains, and fountains of

* Abulfedæ Chorasmia, &c. p. 28. † Geography, p. 243. ubi supra.

‡ Abulfedæ Chorasmia, &c. p. 37.

§ Ebn Haukal, p. 270. The capital is mentioned here by another name, that of Akhsikit. But by Sir W. Jones it is expressly noticed as a city.

burning naphta invite thither the persecuted remains of the Magian sect. Cash, the birth place of the great Timur, is a pleasant city, one days journey from Samarcand; and Naksheb, supposed by D'Anville to be the ancient Nautica,* though, in our author's time, from neglect, its citadel was in ruins, still bore the evident vestiges of its former strength and magnificence.†

Termed, the Oxain of the Greeks, situated on the banks of the Oxus, and in all ages the great passage of that river between Balkh and Mawralnahr, is also a considerable city, very populous, and strongly fortified, for the purpose of defending that passage, with a castle and ramparts. Zamin, is remarkable for producing the finest manna of Asia; and Osrunah, for being the capital of a district that has four hundred towns in it.‡

Thus full of strong cities, and warlike soldiers to defend them, was Mawralnahr at the time of the Mohammedan irruption into its borders; but apparent obstacles to conquest served only to inflame the zeal and courage of those fierce invaders. The love of plunder stimulated them not less than the thirst of glory, for abundant as, we have seen, was this fertile and beautiful country in wealth of every varied species, in mines of gold, of silver, of copper, of quicksilver; rich in gems,§ in silk, in wool, in sal-ammoniac, in the finest manna, and all the rare and delicious productions of the field and the garden; the centre also of the vast commerce

* D'Anville's Ancient Geography, p. 509. † Ibid, p. 260.

‡ See Sir W. Jones's Description of Asia. p. 24.

§ On this subject peruse the following beautiful stanza:

Sweet maid, if thou would'st charm my sight,
And bid these arms thy neck enfold,
That rosy cheek, that lily hand,
Would give thy poet more delight,
Than all Bokhara's vaunted GOLD,
Than all the GEMS of Samarcand.

Sir William Jones's Asiatic Poems, p. 59.

carried on between India and Persia with Russia, China, and to the very northern extremities of Asia, and the thronged resort of the richest merchants of the earth, whose palaces and whose revenues rivalled those of princes, it held out to the Arabian generals no scanty or ignoble spoil. The alluring bait was greedily swallowed, and their rapacious bands rapidly crossing the Oxus, soon poured through her valleys the yell and devastation of war, and fired the groves of the paradise of Asia. But before we proceed to the detail of those disastrous events, it is necessary that we should take a geographical survey of another celebrated and wealthy country in this region of Asia. This country, little known to European geographers, but the scene of many of the most interesting transactions recorded in the following pages, is Chowarazm, or Charasm, numbered, for convenience, by Ebn Haukal, among the provinces of Mawralnahr, though it does not, in fact, belong to it. I shall, however, adopt Ebn Haukal's plan, by describing in this place that remote kingdom, and to his account of it I shall add that of Abulghazi Bahadur, its proper khan in the last century, who must be best acquainted with its history, and that account therefore cannot fail of being more interesting and authentic than any other.

Charasm, or Charism, as the word is sometimes written, the Chorasmia of Ptolemy, stands on both sides of the Oxus, and belongs partly to Iran, and partly to Mawralnahr. It lies between the 38th and 43d degrees of north latitude, and is bounded on the north by Turkestan, by Chorasan, on the south, on the east by the Transoxan provinces, on the west by the sea of Mazenderan, or in other words, the Caspian sea, and is about eighty leagues square.* It may be useful here to premise a few particulars concerning the rise and course of the Oxus, or Jihon. This celebrated

* Sir W. Jones's Description of Asia, p. 20. Abulghazi Bahadur's Hist. Tatars, Vol. II. p. 419.

river, according to Ebn Haukal,* has its source in the territory of Bhadakshan, amidst those high mountains which separate the dominions of the Great Mogul from Grand Tartary, in latitude 39° 30′.† After traversing Great Bokharia, it enters Charasm, and there divides into two great branches, of which that on the left, pursuing a westerly course, discharges itself into the Caspian sea, in latitude 38° 20′; but the left hand branch, which formerly flowed by the walls of the capital, and thence into the Caspian, about twelve leagues to the north of the former, has, within a century and an half, deserted its ancient channel, and taking a north west direction, has mingled its waters with those of the Daria, or Khesell, considerably enlarging the current of that smaller river. The Daria formerly discharged itself into the Caspian, but the Uzbeck Tartars, now lords of Charasm, jealous of the efforts of the Russians to penetrate into the heart of their country by that route, have of recent years diverted its current, and caused it to descend by three channels, cut with great labour, into the lake of Arroll. In consequence of the Jihon having thus deserted its ancient bed, both Corcang and all the cities situated on its borders, have been left desolate and dispeopled, and their once beautiful districts converted into a cheerless sandy desert.‡ Let us return from tracing the river, to the country watered by it.

Its capital, called by the Persians Corcang, but now Urgens, is situated on the west of the Oxus, which in this place bends its course to the north, and is placed in Abulfeda's tables in latitude 42° 17′, and in longitude 85°.§ Its more ancient appellation was doubtless that of the province, and it was in those remote periods to which we allude a place of very considerable importance, and drove a great traffic in all the articles of Eastern merchandize with the provinces situated to the west of the Caspian sea, from whose eastern

* Ebn Haukal's Geography, p. 238.
† Abulghazi Bahadur, Vol. II. p. 444.
‡ Abulghazi Bahadur, Vol. II. p. 449.
§ Abulfedæ Chorasmia, p. 10.

bank it is situated twenty-five German leagues. It is famous for its fine fruits, particularly its arbusses, or water melons, of the most delicious flavour, which are in high request at the courts of all the great Asiatic princes. It produces also, in great quantities, raw silk and saffron. The period of its proudest magnificence was during the reign of the great sultan Mohammed, whose throne was subverted by Gengis Khan, in A. D. 1221; and we may form some judgment of the strength and populousness of this great city, when we read in Oriental writers that it stood out a seven months vigorous siege of the Mogul army, and that when it was at length taken by storm, no less than one hundred, some authors affirm, two hundred thousand, persons perished by the sword of the besiegers.* Its inhabitants seem in every age to have been as brave as they are said to have been beautiful; they distinguished themselves above all the Asiatic legions during the crusades; and for their resolute resistance to the forces of Timur, in 1388, that unsparing conqueror ordered Charasm, to be razed to its very foundations, and the site of it to be sown with barley.* Timur three years afterwards in a fit of remorse, ordered it to be rebuilt and beautified anew, but it never recovered its ancient splendour; and the northern arm of the Oxus having, since that time, altered its course and left the city, close by the walls of which it used to roll towards the Caspian, deserted, Charasm has sunk to the level of a town of secondary note, while the country around, which was formerly remarkable for such luxuriant fertility, being deprived of its salubrious waters, is now little better than a sandy desert. Like Transoxiana itself, and all the neighbouring districts, it has long been in the possession of the Uzbeck Tartars.

Cath, or Khat, is the city of next importance in Charasm, and was formerly the capital, probably at that period when, as recorded

* Fadlallah in the life of Gengis, by De le Croix, p. 255.

† History of Timur Bec. Vol. I. p. 306.

by Abulfeda,* the waters of the Oxus, suddenly swelling to a great height, inundated and ruined Charasm. Cath is situated in latitude 41° 45′ on the north side of the river Daria, towards the frontier of Great Bokhara: though once a great and populous city, it is now greatly declined, and is only resorted to on account of the passage, at that place, over the Daria. Mankishlak, though only a small town, yet on account of its port, which is very magnificent, secure, and deep, and the only one to be found on all this coast of the Caspian sea, should not be passed over in silence. It lies on the north side of the southern branch of the river Oxus or Amu.

The province of Arroll also merits notice, as bestowing its name on the lake Arroll into which the Daria, increased by the waters of the Oxus, flows. The other cities of Charasm, though once populous and flourishing, at this day, owing to the different dispositions of the present, and the ancient inhabitants, the Usbecks being a predatory, wandering race, and not so much attached to agriculture, as plundering their more opulent neighbours, the Persians of Chorasan, are from neglect and the altered course of the Oxus, rapidly hurrying to decay.

Before we quit the geography of these northern districts, where, in the early periods of the Moslem glory, the potent monarchs of the Gaznavide, the Gauride, and Charasmian dynasties, erected their mighty thrones, it may not be amiss, as we are so near them, to add the description of the regions which conferred their names upon the two former of those dynasties. The first of them Gazna, is situated in the mountainous part of Chorasan, in the latitude of about 33°. Gazna is reckoned one of the four capital cities of Chorasan, each of which has been in its turn, the residence of its ancient kings, the other three being Balkh, Meru, and Nisapour. This is the account of the site of Gazna by Ebn Haukal and the editor of Abulghazi; but other Oriental geographers make it a city of

* Abulfedæ Chorasmia, p. 23.

Zablestan, and others of Candahar. It must be owned, however, that the boundaries of these frontier provinces between India and Persia, were perpetually varying under the successive conquerors of them, which may account for the disagreement. At the time when Ebn Haukal composed his geography, Gazna had by no means arrived at that point of celebrity among the cities of Asia, to which Mahmud, by making it the imperial residence in the following century, exalted it. He mentions it, however, as a city, "than which, of all the towns in the district of Balkh, none is more wealthy or commercial, being the pass or frontier of Hindostan." * Of the magnificent palace, in this metropolis of the Gaznavide sultans, its strong castle, its mosque of unequalled splendour, the innumerable bazars for its vast commerce, the baths, caravanseras, and other public edifices erected for purposes of state, or charity, occasionally mentioned in the history of those sultans, and owing their existence to the wealth of plundered India, amidst the ravages of war, and the revolutions of empires, no vestiges remain! The princes of the house of Gaur, when they succeeded to the crown of Gazna, exhausted all their fury on this unfortunate city. Alla, in particular, the uncle of Mohammed Ghori, according to Ferishta, denominated *the incendiary*,† after conquering Byram Shah, one of its latest monarchs, devoted it to flames, to rapine, and to devastation, during seven whole days, destroying even the tombs of its kings, and throwing fire into their very graves. It is said by Sir W. Jones, in the work to which we have had such frequent occasion to refer, to be in its present state "an unpleasant city, and that its inhabitants are obliged to send to Meimend for their fruits and herbage." ‡ To such a degraded condition is reduced the beloved, the imperial residence of the almost omnipotent Mahmud.

* Ebn Haukal's Geography, p. 226. Abulghazi Bahadur's Hist. of the Tartars Vol. II. p. 145. † Ferishta's Indian Hist. Vol. I. p. 128.

‡ Sir William Jones's Description of Asia. p. 7.

Gaur, or Ghor, the country probably meant by Polybius, when speaking of the expedition of Antiochus the Third, against Euthydemus, king of Bactria, by the name of Guria,* is a province and city, bordering on the Paropamisus, or Indian Caucasus, and is said by Ebn Haukal, to be a mountainous country, populous, and containing numerous running streams.† It is classed by this geographer among the cities of Chorasan; and Major Rennel assigns to it a situation south-west of Balkh, ‡ the latitude about 34°. In Ebn Haukal's time, probably from the difficulty of access, this country does not seem to have been entirely subjugated by the Mohammedan arms, for he describes it as mostly inhabited by *infidels*. In fact, the famous Gauride dynasty did not erect their empire on the ruins of that of Gazna, till A. D. 1158, nearly two centuries, according to his editor's computation, after that geographer flourished. Governed for a series of ages by its own native independent princes, and for a time, being the capital of an immense empire, subject to the dynasty dignified by its name, Gaur was doubtless adorned with all the magnificent appendages of a splendid metropolis. Encircled also as it was with the craggy summits of those stupendous mountains that formed its ample barrier, it was less liable to the attacks of an invading enemy, than most of the other regal cities in this part of Asia; consequently its glory must have remained longer unimpaired. The Gauride sovereigns of India, when they removed the seat of empire to Lahore, for the sake of being nearer their valuable possessions in that quarter, gave a deadly blow to its greatness; and the terrible irruptions of Gengis and his Moguls, that turned the finest regions of Asia into a desert, finally completed the ruin of this ancient city. Having taken this survey of the scene of the transactions which we proposed to record, we proceed to a concise narration of the facts themselves.

* See D'Anville's Ancient Geography, p. 506. † Ebn Haukal's Oriental Geography, p. 226. ‡ Geography of Herodotus, p. 298.

The earliest irruption of the Arabs into the envied country beyond the Oxus, is recorded to have been made in the caliphate of Moawiyah, in the 54th year of the Hegira, or A. D. 673, by Obeidollah, the son of the famous Zeyd, governor of Bassora. He was appointed governor of Chorasan, by that caliph, when only twenty-five years old, and his impetuous valour urged him shortly after, to pass that frontier river, and lead the first Arabian army towards the plains of Bokharia. He was opposed by an army very considerable for numbers, but hastily collected, and far less skilled in military affairs than the Moslems, now inured to embattled plains, and well practised in all the manœuvres of war, as at that period conducted. The attack was made with irresistible fury, and the route of the astonished Bokharians was immediate and general. Their flight ceased not till they reached the hills that rise to the north of Bokharia. How precipitate that flight was, may be conjectured from the following curious anecdote, obtained by Ockley from the Oriental sources which he consulted. A queen then reigned over that kingdom, and so sudden was her retreat, that she had only time to put on one of her buskins. The other was left behind on the field, and became the property of the victor. It was so richly ornamented with diamonds, as alone to be valued at two thousand pieces of gold.* The particulars of the plunder of Bokhara are not given, but we may be certain, from the ferocious character of the invaders, that their ravages were dreadful, and from the known wealth of the capital, that the spoil obtained was enormous.

The next year Obeidollah was recalled by the caliph from Chorasan, and placed in the government of Bassora. He was, not long after, succeeded by his younger brother, Salem Ebn Zeyd, who, panting equally for glory and plunder, collected together the choicest troops in that region of Asia, and procuring for them the fleetest horses that could any where be found, made a fresh

* See Ockley's Hist. of the Saracens, Vol. II. p. 120; edit. 1757.

irruption into Mawralnahr, and penetrated quite to Samarcand. The sight of such innumerable bands of cavalry trampling down the groves, the gardens, and cultivated lands of the beautiful plains of Sogd, filled the inhabitants with terror and despair, as they had no adequate force to repel their savage inroads. They were glad, therefore, to purchase peace by freely surrendering the known object of those marauders, their gold and silver, to which the rich merchants of Samarcand contributed an ample proportion. But not satiated with this immense booty, the avarice of Salem descended to the mean robbery of the jewels that decorated the Sogdian crown. They were doubtless of the largest and fairest kind. Salem had taken with him his wife, at that time pregnant, (the first Arabian woman, say the annals, that ever passed the Oxus,) and she falling in labour, was delivered of a son in the Sogd of Samarcand, whence he was afterwards called *Al Sogdi.* At the time of her accouchement, she sent to the Sogdian princess to borrow her jewels, that there might be no deficiency of splendour at the festivity that celebrated the joyful event. The princess readily sent her her golden crown, which contained the finest she possessed. Neither the crown, however, nor the jewels were ever restored, but were carried away with the other spoil to Chorasan.*

Al Makin relates this affair in rather a different manner from the above account of Ockley. He acquaints us, that Salem detached his general Mohalleb, with a considerable part of his forces, against the queen of Bokhara, whom he calls KHATUN; † that this queen, far inferior to the Moslems in number of troops, called to her aid the Turkish king of Said, and promised him her hand in marriage, if success attended their conjoined forces. The Turkish sovereign accepted

* Ockley, Vol. II. p. 194, in an Extract from a MS. of Laud, at Oxford, numbered 161. A; and Al Makin, p. 63.

† This queen, probably, derived her name from Khata, an extensive region in this part of Asia. See Sir William Jones's Description of Asia, p. 26.

the invitation, and immediately marched to her assistance at the head of an army of one hundred and twenty thousand men. Mohalleb, though now far out-numbered, declined not an engagement; and the event was, that, after a long-fought and bloody battle, in which the king of Said died gallantly fighting in the cause of love and glory, the mussulmen were triumphant, and the opposing army completely routed.*

The kingdom of Charazm was too near, too rich, to be free from similar outrage and depredations. The principal wealth of the Charazmians, at that time, lay in the numerous herds of cattle, that fed in the luxuriant pastures of that fertile country. The undiscriminating barbarity of Arabian avarice, making no distinction between a *man* and a *beast*, assessed both men and cattle throughout the kingdom, at a certain sum per head, and Salem retired from its frontiers encumbered with a load of fifty millions. Of this sum, he appropriated a part to the recruiting of the provincial treasury, and sent the rest to Damascus, to be laid at the feet of Yezid, who, about this time, had succeeded his father, Moawiyah, in the caliphate. †

The countries thus rapidly subdued by the army of the earlier Arabian generals, in Transoxiana, were, probably, afterwards wrested from them, by the combined powers of the Turkish khans,

* Where the accounts of the Eastern writers differ, I shall occasionally insert the original that has the variety. Below is that of Al Makin :—

"Eodem anno præfecit Iezidus Chorasanæ Selimum filius Zeiadi, qui Naisaburum profectus, id cepit, et hinc Chouarazmam abiit, quam expugnavit quoque: et deinde Bocharam adiit et occupavit. Regebat hanc tunc temporis mulier quædam nomine Chatunis, quæ contra Muslimos auxilium imploravit Regis Saidæ, vicissim ei pollicens se nupturam ei esse: unde ad eam venit cum 120 millibus. Sed Selimus misit Mahlebum, filium Abusafræ contra Regem Saidæ: qui convenientes prælium commiserunt, in quo occisus est rex cum multis e suis, et Muslimi multa spolia sunt nacti."—Al Makin Hist. Saracen. p. 63.

† Ockley, Vol. I. p. 195.

who had, at a prior period, subjugated this most fertile region of Asia from the Scythian nomades; for we read no more of their transactions in that country till the commencement of the eighth century, when in the year of the Hegira 89, or A. D. 707, two generals of the most daring and rapacious characters, the one named Catiba Ebn Moslem, and the other Mohammed Ebn Casim, were commissioned by the caliph Valid, the sixth of the race of the Ommiades; the former to reconquer, in this quarter, what had been lost; and the latter to attempt the subjection of India itself, to the distant throne of the caliphs. Catibah, or the camel-driver, in which occupation he was brought up, and whence he derived his name, passed the Oxus at the head of an army fully competent to the execution of the task, laid successive siege to Bokhara, Samarcand, Fargana, and other great cities of Transoxiana, attacked, and utterly defeated the army of the Turkish king, seized upon his capital, and plundered it of immense wealth. He then marched to Charazm, and having plundered it, made peace with its monarch, on the condition, that he and his subjects should embrace the Mussulman faith; he erected in that city a magnificent mosque, in which he himself preached every Friday; and ordered the Pagan temples to be stript of the idols, that were fixed to the walls by golden nails, in such numbers, that, when heaped together, they weighed no less than fifty thousand Arabic *drachms*. The idols were burnt, but the massive gold was safely doposited amidst the other spoils of Transoxiana. The annual tribute appointed to be paid by the khan of Charasm to the caliph, was fixed at two millions of gold *dinars*.* Of Mohammed Casim's invasion of India, unfortunately no other particulars are given by Al Makin, than that he seized upon that opulent

* The *dinar* was a gold Arabian coin, of about the weight of the golden *denarius* of the Romans, whence its name is doubtless derived: the value about thirteen shillings and sixpence. The *dirhem* was a small silver coin of the same people, in name and value similar to the Greek *drachm*.

country; that he attacked Dahar, the reigning king of Sind, defeated him in battle, and cut off the head of that prince.* Abulfeda, in Reiske's translation of this expedition, only says, "Mohammed filius Casimi, Indiam victor peragravit;" but, in a note, the editor, from other sources, adds, that this Dahar was king of Daibul, or Diul, that is, Tatta, and that Mohammed Casim attacked and took Multan, the capital of the province of Sind.†

Other Persian and Arab historians, of less note, affirm, that, in this their first expedition, the Mohammedans penetrated into Hind, and conquered the country on both sides the Ganges, but at so early a period of their power, this is scarcely credible, and was with difficulty accomplished by Mahmud, nearly three hundred years afterwards. It is possible, however, that Casim, after his conquest of Sind, might have passed the Indus with his army, and ravaged the Panjab; but, at that period, India was far too populous, and the combined power of its rajahs, when they joined their forces for the national defence, far too formidable, to allow of

* As this part of the Saracen annals records one of the most important irruptions of the Arabians into a part of Asia, so immediately connected with our history, whence afterwards issued the greatest conqueror, Timur, and especially as it marks the fact and æra of the first known Mohammedan invasion of Al Hind, or Hindostan proper, I have inserted the curious, but concise original text below:—

"Catibas autem, filius Muslimæ, oppugnavit terram Baikendæ et Mauranaharam, ac obsedit Bocharam, et occupavit Sogdam, Farganam, et Bagrasam: cumque contra eum convenissent Turcæ, Muslimi eos oppugnarunt, et ceperunt eorum civitatem maximam, et magnas in iis opes sunt prædati. Catibas autem pacem fecit cum rege Chouarazmæ, et extruxit in ea templum cathedrale, inque eo suggestum posuit, e quo concionatus est die Veneris, et oravit cum Muslimis. Jussisque adferri ad se idolis, ea combussit: affixa autem erant clavis aureis, qui pendebant 50 mille drachmas; et pacem cum iis iniit, conditione, ut in singulos annos ei numerarent bis milles mille aureos. Muhammed autem filius Casimi Indiam occupavit; et terram Sindæ oppugnavit, cujus rex erat Daharus, quem oppugnatum Muslimi interfecerunt, et capite truncarunt.—Al Makin Hist. Saracen. p. 84.

† Abulfedæ Annales Muslemici, Tom. I. p. 427, et etiam Annotat. Hist. J. J. Reiskii, p. 107.

any foreign invasion of the interior provinces. Sufficient territory was conquered, to produce the great object of all Arabian invasion, which was plunder, and that in a degree, perhaps before unprecedented, when we consider the natural fertility of the countries invaded, the mass of sacred treasure accumulated in the pagodas, and the various wealth of the merchants and manufacturers of that commercial district. The greatest part of the riches thus acquired, undoubtedly flowed into the coffers of Valid, and it was probably from this source he was enabled to construct, in that superb manner in which he is recorded to have done, the magnificent mosque of Damascus, in erecting and adorning which, according to Al Makin, were expended no less than four hundred purses, each containing fourteen thousand dinars. From the roof six hundred lamps were suspended, by as many golden chains, and the excessive splendour diffused by both, was such as dazzled the eyes of the devout Moslems, and detatched their minds from the steady contemplation of that purer light which they came to adore. Katibah enjoyed the government of Transoxiana, and the other provinces, which he had conquered for the caliph, during the life of Valid, but, on his decease, aspiring at absolute independence, the loyal Moslems of those provinces, opposing his ambitious views, rushed upon him in a body, and he was cut to pieces by the enraged multitude. Thus, the death of the camel-driver was ignominious, like his birth, and cruel, as his conduct. In the annals of the world, indeed, of no race of conquerors, recorded in history, was the advance to distinction more rapid, or more frequent and sudden the descent to shame and ruin.

As, after this period, the name of India occurs not in the page of the historians of the Moslem exploits in the East, for a long interval, we must conclude, that the regions conquered by Mohammed Casim, and it is positively asserted by the writers, copied by Herbelot, to have included also the country on this side of the Ganges, though, I

confess, the assertion is scarcely credible, that the whole of the tract in question, was retained by the governors of Chorasan, while the power of the caliphs flourished in any degree of vigour, in quiet obedience, on the usual terms of an annual tributary acknowledgement of their authority. But when the boundless luxury of those caliphs, as well the later sovereigns of the house of Ommiyah, and the more lofty and magnificent Abbassides had, by their baneful example of a throne, polluted by the grossest debaucheries, occasioned a general corruption of manners to pervade the empire, and, with it, that relaxation of discipline, that effeminate indolence, which unnerve the arm, and emasculate the spirit of the warrior; the governors of the provinces, most remote from the seat of empire, contemptuously cast off a yoke, too disgraceful to be longer endured, and proclaiming themselves absolutely independent of the power that created them, assumed all the ensigns and attributes of royalty. The desponding caliphs, unable to depend, in the time of danger, on their own enervated troops, called down, from their mountains, the intrepid warriors of the north; and, in the reign of the caliph Motassem, the eighth of the Abbassides, fifty thousand hardy natives of Turkestan guarded, with their sabres, the menaced palace and treasury of Bagdad. These valiant mountaineers, however, eventually proved the most fatal tyrants of the government they were summoned to uphold, and, at their pleasure, disposed of the sceptre and life of the pusillanimous descendants of the illustrious Al Abbas. The history of their misfortunes and degradations, would be a painful task, and is foreign to the design of this history, which has only noticed the rapid rise, and gradual progress of the Moslem power in Asia, as introductory to the narrative of the conquest of India, the proudest portion of Mohammedan spoil, by the princes of the successive dynasties of Gazna, Gaur, and Charazm.

The first and most famous of those dynasties that in Asia broke

from their fetters, was that of the Taherides, so called from the valiant Taher Ebn Hosein, its founder, who began to flourish in A. D. 813, and of whom, and his race, the reader may not be displeased with the following concise account from the text of Mirkhond himself.* The perfidy of Al Amin having deprived Al Mamoon of the caliphate, to which, though a younger brother, he had been solemnly and publicly appointed by his father, the great Harun Al Rashid, Taher was the general who vindicated the rights of the latter, beat the armies sent against him, crushed the usurper himself, and finally placed his master upon the throne of Bagdad. For this and his various other eminent services to the caliph, he was presented to the prefecture of Chorasan, with almost unlimited control in that region of Asia. These honours, at his death, were confirmed to his son, and made hereditary in his family, who successively enjoyed them to the fourth generation, in a state of power and splendour almost independent of the throne. The inferior branches of the Taherid family were also exalted to places of the highest emolument and the greatest trust in the empire, for so late as the year A. D. 865, we learn from Al Makin, that a direct descendant of the line, Mohammed Ebn Abdallah Ebn Taher, was commandant of Bagdad, the metropolis of the Moslem empire. This also was a very brave and skilful general, and remained faithful to the fortunes of his sovereign, the caliph, Al Mostain, who made him so, till he found him guilty of secretly plotting with the Turkish generals, his enemies, to have him assassinated. Mohammed then joined the party that exalted Al Motazz, his brother, to the abdicated throne.† The enormous influence in the state of this great military family, who were as distinguished for wisdom and virtue, as for valour, was

* Hist. Priorum Regum Pers. ex Mirkhond, in Dynast. Taheridarum, p. 1 to 13; Viennæ, 1782. Vide etiam Leb Tarikh, p. 31 and 32.

† Al Makin Hist. Saracen. p. 202. and Abulfeda, ad annum Hegiræ 252. or Tom. II. p. 215.

doubtless the result of the fears of the caliphs, who appeared anxious to grant as a boon, that which might otherwise have been wrested from them by violence.

Their most imperious lords, however, at this time, were their Turkish guards, who exalted and dethroned the caliphs at their pleasure; and no more impressive instance of it occurs in their whole history, than what is manifested in the melancholy fate of Al Motazz himself, who, because, from the exhausted state of the treasury, unable to discharge their arrears of pay, after being cruelly beaten by them with clubs, was ignominiously dragged by the feet from his splendid palace, exposed naked at its gates to the rays of the scorching sun, and afterwards consigned to a damp and gloomy dungeon, amidst whose pestilential horrors he expired in the extremes of pain and hunger. A circumstance is added by the Moslem historians, of almost incredible barbarity in a parent; that the enraged soldiers offered to desist from their cruel treatment, if the caliph could have advanced them only the trifling sum of *fifty thousand dinars;* that he immediately applied for that sum to his mother Cabiha, the most beautiful but avaricious woman of her age, but that, though immensely rich, she refused his request, and let him perish under their torturing hands. When the succeeding caliph, Al Mohtadi, afterwards seized on the wealth of this unfeeling woman, as esteeming it the plunder of the public treasury, which wealth she had taken the precaution to bury deep in the concealing earth, it was found to consist of the following articles, viz. a million of golden dinars, a *macuc* or bushel of emeralds, another of pearls, and a smaller measure called *cailaja*, of the finest rubies.* Some

* It is possible, that the insertion of the above passage may subject me to the censure of credulity, and my page to the stigma of hyperbole. I subjoin, therefore, the *original* from Reiske's Abulfeda.

Ingentes illa, quas possidebat, opes, mille numorum aureorum millia, Bagdadi *humo* sollicite defoderat. Eruta quoque fuerunt per illas turbas et ejus absentiam et

allowance must here be made for Oriental exaggeration, yet it will be remembered, that the empire of the caliphs at that time extended, nominally at least, over three parts of the habitable world, and the charms of Cabiha held in chains its vanquished and despotic master. The reader will pardon this little digression, which has been solely made for the purpose of exhibiting one decisive proof of that enormous height to which the insolence of the Turkish slaves, on whom the caliphs principally depended for their safety, had arrived. The power of the latter, indeed, was rapidly declining, and the independency assumed in the distant prefectures, by the Taherides, the Soffarides, the Samanian, and other dynasties, contributed not a little, in its eastern quarter at least, to the final subversion of their unweildy empire.

The frequent vicissitudes that took place at the helm, involved the adherents of the transient sovereigns of Bagdad in all the perils and disgrace to which he was himself exposed. The zealous and loyal subject of to-day, by the change of state councils, became to-morrow an alien and a rebel; he was hurled headlong from the highest pinnacle of affluence and dignity into the abyss of poverty and degradation, or had his ambitious career terminated by the hand of the executioner. Causes like these, doubtless paved the way to the usurpation by the posterity of Taher, of Transoxiana, Chorasan, and the finest part of Persia, which they enjoyed for nearly sixty years, from A. D. 813 to A. D. 872, when Chorasan was attacked and conquered by the famous Yacub Ebn Leith, the Soffarian, or *the brazier*, such having been the original occupation of

Saleho, Vasifi filio, tradita, fiscella, smaragdorum tantum fere continens, quantum æquat mensuram MACUC dictam, et alia fiscella, *paris molis*, margaritis referta, nec non alia minor, ferme cailagam æquans rubinorum quibus pares qui vidisset, nemo fuit! ad talium tantarumque rerum conspectum stupefactus Saleh; male perdat Deus Cabiham, ait, quæ, tantarum dives opum, passa tamen fuit, pro vilibus aureorum quinquaginta millibus, FILIUM infami supplicio tolli. Abulfedæ Annales Muslemici, Arabicè et Latinè, opera et studiis, J. J. Reiske, Tom. II. p. 227.

the founder of the family, who exchanged the art of fabricating, for that of using, *arms*. In his new military capacity, Jacob's first services were exerted for the prince of Sejestan, of which province he was a native. Inflamed by success, Jacob boldly seized the sceptre of the kingdoms obtained in arduous conflict, for another; a vast army, impatient for plunder, following the daring adventurer, he rapidly extended his conquests on every side, seized on Herat, Kerman, Balk, and Cabul, and at last advancing towards Nishapour, the seat of government, dispatched messengers to Mohammed, the last of the Taherides, commanding him to surrender up the keys of the city, and open the gates of the castle. Mohammed, who affected to acknowledge the authority of the caliph, and who, as well as his predecessors, had from time to time, obtained renewed grants of the government of Chorasan, returned by the messengers this answer, that he held Chorasan for the caliph, and demanded to see the royal letters and the commission appointing him his successor. Jacob furiously drawing his sword from the scabbard, exclaimed, "Tell Mohammed, *this is* my commission." That sword finally seated him on the throne of Chorasan; and Mohammed and his family languished for some years, in the prison of that palace where they had lived in magnificence not inferior to the sovereign of Bagdad.*

The vast additional domain thus acquired by the arms of the aspiring son of Leith, proved by no means sufficient to fill up the wide grasp of his ambition. Nothing less than the throne of the caliphs could assuage his insatiable thirst for empire. After a proper pause and preparation, he set off from his new capital, to try his fortune in the field with the imperial forces; and therefore, compared with the views of this usurper, the incroachments of the Taherides on the regal prerogative, were inoffensive and almost excuseable. They

* Hist. Priorum Regum Persarum ex Mirkhond. in Dynastiâ Soffaridarum, p. 14, et seq. Vide etiam Leb Tarikh. p. 33.

acknowledged, at least, a feudal relation to the throne of Bagdad; but the brazier of Sejestan disdained them even as rivals, and aimed at their total expulsion. In his way he reduced the Persian Irak, and seized upon Ahwaz, where, in the plunder of the palace, he is said by Al Makin to have acquired forty millions of dirhems, quadraginta mille *staterum* millia, a sum scarcely credible, though the accumulated wealth of Mohammed Ebn Wasil, a rebel like himself, who had been long engaged in distracting and robbing the empire, but whose army he had totally routed.* With high raised and confident hopes of shortly becoming the sovereign lord of Asia, at the head of an army equally formidable for numbers and bravery, he pressed on towards Bagdad, but his progress thither was arrested by a still mightier conqueror, Death. He expired in his camp of an inflammation of the intestines, under the agonizing pains of which severe disease, he rejected with equal firmness, the medicines of his physicians, and the proffered peace, on his own terms, of the sovereign of Bagdad, in A. D. 878.† His brother, Amru Ebn Leith, immediately took the command of his numerous army, and the possession of his immense empire. Amru, however, had neither the boundless ambition nor military talents of his brother, and the trembling caliph was happy to avert the threatened blow, by ceding to that chieftain whatsoever new acquisitions of territory, or revenue, his more moderate ambition demanded. The coffers of the imperial treasury were exhausted to appease him, and the nominal government, but, in fact, the sovereignty of Persia, including Chorasan, was invested in himself and made hereditary in his family. A power that might almost be deemed a rival, so formidable in arms and so near the throne too, could not be brooked by the haughty race of the caliphs, and Amru's government being complained of as oppressive, by the inhabitants of Chorasan, as the less evil of the

* Al Makin, Hist. Saracen. p. 213.

† Hist. Reg. Pers. ex Mirkhond, in Dynast. Soff. p. 22.

two, they invited the brave Ismael Samani, who had rendered himself independent in Mawaralnahr, to pass the Oxus, attack that prefect, and take the prefecture of Chorasan as his reward. The Transoxan prince crossing that river at the head of ten thousand horse, whose *wooden stirrups*, (stapedes lignei,) marked the honest poverty of that leader, accepted the caliph's invitation, with that comparatively small body of men attacked and defeated the Soffarian army of eighty thousand men, took Amru captive, and sent him in chains to the foot of the imperial throne!* The dynasty of the Soffarides, however, was not wholly crushed by the capture of their chief, and the rout of his army. His descendants, by the liberality of Ismael Samani, and the consent of the caliphs, continued for many years, to reign with extensive delegated authority in Sejestan, their hereditary sovereignty, and the neighbouring districts. The recital of their adventures, however, is foreign to the illustration of this history, which merely notices their rise and extinction, as introductory to some account of the Samanian and Gaznavide dynasties that sprang up, on phœnix pinions, from their mighty ruins.

As the power of the caliphs gradually declined, that of the governors of the distant provinces necessarily expanded; till, at length, after the decease of Al Rhadi, in A. H. 329, or A. D. 940,† the fifteenth of the Abasside sovereigns, and who had, with difficulty, towards the close of his reign sustained the tottering empire, their authority became a shadow, and themselves utterly dependent on their Turkish lords, their viziers, and their generals, whose struggles for the supreme power, at that time, convulsed this region of Asia. Egypt and Syria were torn from them by the potent dynasties of

* Hist. Prior. Reg. Pers. ex Mirkhond. in Dynast. Soffarid. p. 29.

† Abulfedæ Annal. Muslem. Tom. II. p. 411. and Al Makin, p. 259. These two Annalists do not always agree in their dates; in this instance they do agree, and it is important, as being, in fact, the date of the extinction of all the *real* power of the caliphate.

the TOULONIDES and IKSHIDITES, whose history, about this period, engrosses a considerable portion of the Mussulman annals. The resistless swords of the BOWIDES, three valiant brothers, the founders of the celebrated dynasty of that name, had secured to themselves the whole of Persia, except Chorasan, which province, and Transoxiana remained undisturbed in the possession of the Samanian family.*

With the Bowides, of whom one brother held his court at Shiraz, in Farsistan, or Persia, properly so called, and the two others at Ispahan, in the mountainous district, or the ancient Parthia, the prudent Ismael Samani provoked no contests, but the field for new conquest being now open, he turned his eye and his arms towards the provinces that stretched between the frontiers of Chorasan and India. Those arms, in every effort, were successful, and within no very extended period, his wide-spreading empire embraced Candahar, Zabulistan, of which Gazna may properly be said to be the capital; Cabul, and all that mountainous region, possessed by the hardy and martial Afghan tribes. The residence of the imperial family of Samani was at Bokhara, where, venerated for their wisdom and virtue, and dreaded for their justice and valour, they enjoyed in profound tranquillity their newly-acquired dominions, during a period of ninety years. At that period, the accession of a minor to the vacant throne gave birth to civil commotions, which terminated in a division of this vast empire. Abistagi, the governor for the Samanides, of Chorasan, a nobleman of great military fame and talents, disgusted at the conduct of MANSUR the young prince on the throne, seized on Chorasan and Zabulistan, utterly defeated the imperial forces sent to expel him thence, and caused himself to be crowned, at Gazna, the following year. He reigned fifteen years in undisturbed possession of his

* Consult. Hist. Reg. Pers. ex Mirkhond, in Dynastia Samanidarum, p. 36, and Abulfeda, and Al Makin, under the respective years of the Hegira in which these dynasties are noticed.

usurped domain; but, on his decease, the imperial family, reviving their ancient claims, repeatedly attempted to wrest the kingdom from his son, Abu Isaac, but were as repeatedly repulsed by Subuctagi, the skilful and brave general of the latter. Pacific terms were at length agreed to, by the house of Samania; a solemn compact confirmed the independence of the kingdom; and Subuctagi, on the death of Isaac, was, by the unanimous voice of the army, firmly seated on a throne, which his virtues merited, and his valour had secured. This important event took place in Anno Hegiræ 365, or A. D. 977.*

Before, however, we proceed to any particular details concerning the invasion of India, by the Gaznavide sultans, it is material for us to notice the very curious account, translated by M. Renaudot, from an Arabian manuscript, of the travels in India, nearly a century previous to this period, of two Mohammedan merchants, to whom the arms of Mohammed Casim, by the conquest of Sind, had probably opened the way to its interior provinces. That account, from what we now know of the political situation, the manners, customs and commerce of India, bears every mark of authenticity; and though some obscurity hangs over it, in consequence of the different denomination, at that time, of many of the places and cities described, from those by which they are now known; yet, on the whole, it appears to exhibit the true picture of India, as it then flourished. The communication from Multan, the capital of Sind, with the provinces beyond the Indus, was, at that period, considerable; and the mercantile genius of the Arabians had converted it into a grand emporium, for the manufactures of Persia, on the one hand, and of India, on the other. Our merchants, however,

* Ferishta, Vol. I. p. 23.—But Abulfeda places this permanent establishment of Subuctagi, or Sabektekin, as the Arabians write the word, on an independent throne, at Gazna, in the succeeding year, 366, under which date, the above, and other particulars, may be found.—Annal. Muslem. Vol. II. p. 529.

seem to have commenced their journey from Bassora, that still greater mart, erected, soon after the conquest of Persia by the sagacious policy of the caliph, Omar, on the western bank of that mighty river, formed by the junction of the Euphrates and Tigris, and their coasting navigation, along the Persian gulph, the Indian shores, and, among the numerous islands south of Comorin and Selendib, quite to Canton, in China, is minutely described, as well as those islands themselves, their inhabitants, and productions.* This incontestibly proves, how rapidly, and how far eastward, the Moslem navigators had extended their commerce, even in the earliest periods of the Hegira; and, in their catalogue of the articles imported, the rich silks, the camphire, and the porcelain, transparent as glass, from China, and the gold, gems, and perfumes of India, and its islands, we trace the sources of the immense wealth displayed in the superb palaces of Damascus and Bagdad. With their navigation, however, we have less concern than with their internal survey of India, in which they confirm the account given in a former page, of the vast empire, the riches, the splendid court and palace of a monarch, reigning in Guzzurat, by the name of the BALHARA, whose metropolis was before noticed as the *Baleocuri-regia* of the classics; this term being rather a title of distinction, than an appellative, and meaning the supreme lord.† His capital,

* Ancient Accounts of India and China, by Renaudot, from page 2, to p. 11.

† Concerning this sovereign of Guzzurat, the account of the Nubian geographer is also very minute; and, indeed, considering the few sources of information in our possession, concerning the interior of India, during the early periods of the Mohammedan æra, extremely interesting. I have inserted it below:—

"Rex autem Nahroaræ maximus est, et vocatur Balahara, possidetque exercitus, et elephantos: colitque idolum Bodda; gestat in capite tiaram auream, induiturque stolis auro contextis. Equos conscendit semper: et semel equitat singulis hebdomadibus, equitantque cum eo centum ferè mulieres, nullo præter ipsas alio comite; sunt autem vestibus auratis indutæ, pulcherrimis decoratæ ornamentis, aurea atque argentea monilia manibus pedibusque gestantes, sparsis per lacerta comis: simul jocantur, et aliæ alias impellunt, rege præeunte. Proconsules vero, et militiæ duces

at the time of their visit, was called NEHALWARAH, written by Rennell Nehrwalla, and said, by him, to have anciently given name to the whole province.* The perplexity resulting in ancient geographical investigation, from the vicissitudes to which the names of places and cities are exposed, has been already noticed. Unable, therefore, precisely to specify the particular sovereigns and capitals alluded to, under their Arabic appellations; and the books, besides being very scarce and curious, I prefer presenting the reader with the original account at length, than with an analysis and conjectures, which might mislead him. The principal passages that have relation to India, (for of China I am not writing the history) are inserted below. The reader will please to remember, that it is an Arab's report, at the period of the highest glory of the Moslem empire.

Account of the Interior Regions of India, by certain Mohammedan Travellers, in the ninth Century; translated from an Arabian MSS. by M. Renaudot.

Both the Indians and Chinese agree, that there are four great, or principal kings in the world; they allow the king of the Arabs to be the first, and to be, without dispute, the most powerful of kings, the most wealthy, and the most excellent every way; because he is

non equitant cum illo, nisi cum egreditur pugnaturus adversus hostes suos, aut contra eos, qui aliquid dominii sui usurpare tentaverint, vel in vicinos reges, ejus regionum aggressores. Habet autem elephantos plurimos, in quibus præcipue consistit exercitus sui robur. Regnum hoc hereditario jure possidetur a regibus suis, qui omnes uno invariabili nomine vocantur Balahara, quod significat Regem Regum. Ad urbem Nahroara multi se conferunt mercatores Moslemanni ad negotiandum; et rex ejusdem urbis honorifice suscipit viatores illuc appellentes, eorumque bona custodit."—Geograph. Nub. p. 63.

* See Rennell's Index to his Memoir, confirmed by Orme. Historical Fragments, p. 149. See also Ferishta, Vol. I. p. 79.

the prince and head of a great religion, and because no other surpasses him in greatness, or power.

The emperor of China reckons himself next after the king of the Arabs, and after him the king of the Greeks; and, lastly, the Balhara, king of Moharmi al Adan, or of *those who have their ears bored.* This Balhara is the most illustrious prince in all the Indies; and all the other kings there, though each is master, and independant in his kingdom, acknowledge in him this prerogative and pre-eminence. When he sends ambassadors to them, they receive them with extraordinary honours, on account of the respect they bear him. This king makes magnificent presents after the manner of the Arabs; and has horses and elephants in very great number, and great treasures in money. He has of those pieces of silver called Tartarian drachms, which weigh half a drachm more than the Arabic drachm. They are coined with the die of the prince, and bear the year of his reign, from the last of the reign of his predecessor. They compute not their years from the æra of Mohammed, as do the Arabs, but only by the years of their kings. Most of these princes have lived a long time, and many of them have reigned above fifty years.

Balhara is an apellative common to all these kings, as was Cosroes, and some others, and is not a proper name. The country, which owes obedience to this prince, begins on the coast of the province called Kamkam, (Concan) and reaches by land to the confines of China. He is surrounded by the dominions of many kings, who are at war with him, and yet he never marches in person against them. One of these kings is the king of Haraz, who has very numerous forces, and is stronger in horse than all the other princes of the Indies; but is an enemy to the Arabs, though he, at the same time, confesses their king to be the greatest of kings; nor is there a prince in the Indies who has a greater aversion to Mohammedism. His dominions are upon a promontory, where are much

riches, many camels, and other cattle. The inhabitants here traffic with silver, which they wash for; and they say there are mines of the same, on the continent. There is no talk of robbers in this country, no more than in the rest of the Indies.

On one side of this kingdom lies that of Tafek, which is not of very great extent; this king has the finest white women in all the Indies; but he is subject to the kings about him; his army being but small. He has a great affection for the Arabs, as well as the Balhara.

These kingdoms border upon the lands of a king called Rahmi, who is at war with the king of Haraz, and with the Balhara also. This prince is not much considered either for his birth, or the antiquity of his kingdom; but his forces are more numerous than those of the Balhara, and even than those of the kings of Haraz and Tafek. They say, that when he takes the field, he appears at the head of fifty thousand elephants; and that he commonly marches in the winter season, because the elephants, not being able to bear with thirst, he can move at no other time. They say also, that, in his army, there are commonly from ten to fifteen thousand tents. In this same country, they make cotton garments, in so extraordinary a manner, that no where else are the like to be seen. These garments are, for the most part, round, and wove to that degree of fineness, that they may be drawn through a ring of a middling size.

Shells are current in this country, and serve for small money, notwithstanding that they have gold and silver, wood-aloes, and sable-skins, of which they make the furniture of saddles and housings. In this same country, is the famous karkandan, or unicorn, who has but one horn upon his forehead, and thereon a round spot, with the representation of a man. The whole horn is black, except the spot in the middle, which is white. The unicorn is much smaller than the elephant; from the neck downwards, he

pretty much resembles the bufflar; for strength, he is extraordinary, therein surpassing all other creatures; his hoof is not cloven; and, from his foot to his shoulder, he is all of a piece. The elephant flies from the unicorn, whose lowing is like that of an ox, with something of the cry of a camel. His flesh is not forbidden, and we have eaten of it. There are great numbers of this creature in the fens of this kingdom, as also in all the other provinces of the Indies; but the horns of these are the most esteemed, and upon them are generally seen the figures of men, peacocks, fishes, and other resemblances. The Chinese adorn their girdles with these sorts of figures; so that some of these girdles are worth two or three thousand pieces of gold in China, and sometimes more, the price augmenting with the beauty of the figure. All the things, we have here enumerated, are to be purchased in the kingdom of Rahmi for shells, which are the current money.

After this kingdom there is another which is an inland state, distant from the coast, and called Kaschbin. The inhabitants are white, and bore their ears: they have camels, and their country is a a desart, and full of mountains.

Farther on upon the coast, there is a small kingdom called Hitrange, which is very poor; but it has a bay, where the sea throws up great lumps of ambergrease. They have also elephants teeth and pepper; but the inhabitants eat it green, because of the smallness of the quantity they gather.

Beyond the kingdoms here mentioned, there are others of number unknown, and among the rest, that of Mujet. The inhabitants are white, and dress after the Chinese mode: their country is full of mountains with white tops, and of very great extent. Here are great quantities of musk, esteemed the most exquisite in the world. They have war with all the neighbouring kingdoms. The kingdom of Mabed is beyond that of Mujet; therein are many cities, and the inhabitants have a great resemblance to the Chinese, even more

than those of Mujet; for they have officers or eunuchs like those who govern the cities among the Chinese. The country of Mabed is conterminous with China, and is at peace with the emperor of China, but is not subject to him.

The kings of the Indies wear ear-rings of precious stones set in gold. They wear also collars of great price, adorned with precious stones of divers colours, but especially green and red; yet pearls are what they most esteem, and their value surpasses that of all other jewels; they at present hoard them up in their treasures, with their most precious things. The grandees of their court, the great officers and captains, wear the like jewels in their collars. They dress in a half vest, and carry a parasol of peacocks feathers to shade them from the sun; and are surrounded by those of their train.

Their kings, and persons of high quality have fresh tables made for them every day, together with little dishes and plates, wove of the cocoa-nut leaf; in which they eat what is prepared for their subsistance: and their meal over, they throw the table, the dishes, and plates, into the water, together with the fragments they have left. Thus, at every meal they have a new service.

To the Indies they formerly carried the dinars, called Sindiat, or gold pieces of the Sind, and the dinar there passes for three of ours, and even more.

Thither also are carried emeralds from Egypt, which are set for rings.*

It must be evident to the Indian student in history, that under these mutilated names were meant to be designated, beside the Balhara's domain, that of the Deccan sovereign, whose capital, we have seen, was Tagara, or Deogur, and which does not seem to have been penetrated by the armies of any Mohammedan power, till late in the thirteenth century, and that by the Rahmi, and other neighbouring princes, must have been meant the Ranna of Chitore,

* Ancient Accounts of India and China, p. 99. London, 1733.

and other rajahs of the mountainous country of Ajimere, and of the Gauts, quite to the Comarian Promontory, ever at war with each other, and all with the more potent Balhara. Their account too of the customs and superstitions of the natives, particularly of the expiatory tortures voluntarily inflicted upon themselves by the Hindoo devotees, and of the predominant practice of the women burning themselves on the funeral pile of their deceased husbands, are equally correct, but these have already been noticed by extracts from the same book, in various parts of the Indian Antiquities.

To resume the subject at present of most importance in this work, their *geographical details*, I must observe, that upon the rather perplexed account of these Arabian merchants, who might take much upon hear-say, great light will be reflected from another ancient manuscript, found in the library of the French king, and translated by the historian De Guignes. It was written about a century after their visit to India, by one Masoudi, an Arabian also, and contains a summary of general history, entitled, THE GOLDEN MEADOWS. After some idle details relative to the extended reigns of Indian heroes and demi-gods, some of whom are said to have reigned many hundred years, M. De Guignes proceeds to give the substance of the remainder, for it is not a literal translation, in the following words:

Extract from THE GOLDEN MEADOWS *of Masoudi, an Arabian Manuscript of the tenth Cenury, concerning the interior State of India at that Period; by M. De Guignes.*

"This is what is told of the ancient kings of India; but what Masoudi adds, is more worthy our attention. It is usual with him to finish all his relations by declaring the state of the country, as it was in his time, and often what he had himself seen. This

affords us a knowledge of that age; which we find no where else, and which the Arabians, who were then great voyagers, could alone procure.

"After the reign of Kouros, (CURU probably,) the Indians divided, and formed different kingdoms. There was a king in the country of Sind towards the Indies; one in the country of Canouge towards the Ganges; one in Kaschmir; one in the city of Mankir, otherwise called the *Grand Houza*, this must be near Guzzerat. Masoudi, and all the Arabian authors give the prince who reigned there, the title of Balhara. This, he says, is the first and most powerful king of India, where a long race of sovereigns have reigned under this title, and they subsisted in his time. We may here add, that they existed also in the time of Ptolemy the geographer. We see here a very important and very ancient division of India, of which we had not the least knowledge.

"As there is little order in this work in general, and Masoudi speaks of the Indians elsewhere, I may be permitted to deviate from his method, in order to draw objects together which are too much scattered. He returns to this subject in another place, and says, that Kaschmir, which forms a part of India, is surrounded on all sides by very high mountains; the interior part of the country is filled with a prodigious number of cities and villages, and that it can be entered at one place only, which is shut by a gate.

"The kingdom of Bourouh, the same as Canouge, is 120 Indian parasangs in extent. The king keeps always on foot four armies, consisting together of 700,000 men; or, according to others, of 900,000 men. With the northern army he opposes the king of Moultan and the Mussulmans; with the southern army, the Balhara, who is the king of kings, whose residence is eighty parasangs from the sea, towards the coast of Malabar, to the north. With the other two armies, the king of Canouge makes war on his other neighbours. There are many cities and towns in his country; but, in comparison of the

other kings of India, this prince has but few elephants armed for war; they do not reckon more than 1000 of that kind. Such was the state of India in the time of Masoudi. He tells us also, that Moultan was still filled by a prince of the family of Sama, son of Louai, son of Ghaleb; and that he was neighbour to the Mussulmans. That there was in this country an idol, to which all the Indians repaired in pilgrimage; they call it the idol of Moultan: his temple is remarkably rich. Masoudi assures us he had travelled over this country; and adds, that the prince who reigned in his time was named Aboul-doulat-al-mounbeh, son of Asad-al-carschi, the Syrian. Thence he arrived at another city of India, named Mansoura, distant from Moultan sixty-five Indian parasangs; Mansura is near the Indus;* a prince named Aboul-moundar, son of Abdallah, reigned there. This city of Mansoura is so named from Mansour, son of Dgiambour, lieutenant to the khalif Ommiades.

"The same author informs us, that the Mussulmans were much respected by the Balhara; that there were some well-built mosques in this country, where they prayed five times a day. They ascribed the long life of the Balhara and his numerous posterity, to his justice, and the protection he granted the Mussulmans. In the ideas we have formed of the Indians and their sciences, we have not considered their connections with foreigners. From the time of Alexander the Great, the Romans, the Persians, and Arabians, have settled in India, and ruled there; and must necessarily have contributed to the progress of the sciences among the Indians.

"Masoudi points out, in a few words, some other countries, more easterly than Balhara, and ends with that of Hated, contiguous to China. This must be a part of Thibet. The prince that reigned there was very powerful, and carried war into China: which is correct; for, in fact, we find that, in the history of China, at that time the nations of Toufan, or of Thibet, were very troublesome

* A parasang is said to be eight miles.

neighbours to the Chinese, whose frontiers they ravaged. But Masoudi is not sufficiently clear, and the names he assigns to countries are often unknown to us.

"Hitherto we have followed him in his survey of the northern part of India; let us see what he relates of the southern. "India," says he "is a vast country, surrounded by the sea. It borders upon the kingdom of Zanedge, or Zindge. The latter is governed by a king, who bears the title of mehradge." It is the same as the maa-raja, or great rajah, which has since been borne by the sovereign of the Mahrattas, which name is formed from that of maha-rajah. This mehradge was, according to Masoudi, the king of the Isles: by which he means the Peninsula of India; for the Arabians make use of the same appellation for island and peninsula, and confound them together. It is then of the southern part of India he treats in this place. "This country is situated between India and China, but adjacent to India, properly so called; which is confined, on one side, by the mountains of Khorasan. The Zindges differ from the other Indians in figure, colour, and temper; and they believe the metempsychosis." We here see, that he distinguishes these people from the Indians, properly so called, who lived towards the north. He also speaks of the king of Conrad, or of Cape Comorin, who was at war with the mehradge. The Arabians, at this time, were perfectly acquainted with the Indies, and frequented the coasts of Malabar and Coromandel; also the whole northern parts of India: but their historians do not describe these countries so minutely as we could wish."*

The above relations appear to me to exhibit, except in the exaggerated account of the forces of the Canouge sovereign, a tolerably correct outline of the greater divisions of India, and of the powers presiding in it, at the time they were written, and they will in a great degree be corroborated, in the course of events that will

* Extracts from Manuscripts in the French King's library, Vol. I. p. 128.

very shortly be recorded in the pages of this history. They prove a wider extension of the Mohammedan power and influence in the vicinity of Southern India, than the slender accounts in the Moslem annals afforded reason to suppose. If the Sanscreet names of places could have been better expressed in Arabic characters, they would doubtless have been more correct, but even in their present state, we are extremely obliged by this detailed intelligence, in regard to the interior of India, immediately previous to the irruption of the sultans of Gazna, to the consideration of which we now return.

Soon after he had ascended the throne, Subuctagi, who was by birth a Tartar, and a soldier of fortune, having served first only as a private dragoon in the army of his master, Abistagi, had the policy to strengthen himself upon it, by marrying the daughter of that prince. In the very first year of his reign, perhaps to give employment to the turbulent and warlike Afghans, who formed so large a portion of his subjects, Subuctagi commenced, under the usual pretext of religion, a destructive war upon the idolaters of India, but contented himself in this expedition, with ravaging only its frontiers. He returned, however, loaded with immense plunder to Gazna, and the ease with which it was obtained, seems to have served only as an incitement to fresh attempts. JEIPAL, then reigned in Lahore, a province described as, at that period, extending in length, from the mouth of the Indus to Limgan, and in breadth, from the kingdom of Cashmere to Multan. This prince having severely suffered by this and other preceding irruptions of the Mohammedan marauders, well acquainted with the warlike character of the sovereign of Gazna, and justly fearful of frequent repetitions of them, determined no longer to act solely on the defensive, but levying a vast army, attempted to carry the war into the invader's territories. Subuctagi met the Indian chief on the extreme confines of his domain, and both armies prepared for action, but in the night preceding the intended battle, a tremendous storm, imputed to the

effects of magic, by the Indian historians, of mingled thunder, lightning, hail, and wind, scattered the horse and his rider over the plain, and in particular did such material damage in the Indian camp, that Jeipal was compelled to solicit peace, by the proffer of an annual tribute, and a considerable present in elephants and gold. The proffer was at first rejected, which occasioned the utmost dismay in the Indian camp, as whole squadrons of cavalry had perished in the hurricane; and paleness and dejection, the effect rather of superstitious horror, than corporeal fear, sate upon every countenance. Subuctagi himself, was not unwilling to grant them peace upon the terms proposed, but young Mahmud, his son, the future scourge of Hindostan, was with him in the army, and in some previous skirmishes had greatly distinguished himself. This martial youth, panting for glory, and ardent still farther to signalize himself, used his utmost efforts to prevent his father's acceptance of them. Jeipal on this, solicited a conference, and bade the Tartar monarch beware how he drove to despair the irritated, but resolute Indians, who now supposed themselves suffering under the momentary wrath of their gods. "They have," says he, "when reduced to the last extremity, a dreadful custom; in the phrenzy of desperation, they first massacre their wives and children, to save them from violation and captivity: they then set fire to those terrestrial habitations, for which they have no longer occasion, and, with dishevelled hair and horrible outcries, they rush upon the foe, nor leave the bloody field, till either they are cut off themselves, or have exterminated their adversaries!" Subuctagi, reluctant to plunge them into that extremity, permitted their safe retreat to Lahore, on condition of receiving a million of dirms, and a present of fifty elephants.*

It is painful, in recording the first great transaction of the Hindoos with their Gaznavian invaders, to announce on their part, an act of perfidy. Their situation was perilous; the terms were not

* Ferishta, Vol I. p. 26. Leb Tarikh, p. 35.

oppressive, considering the wealth of the Indian prince; and they ought, even with an enemy, to have been religiously fulfilled. Notwithstanding, however, the delivery of hostages of the most distinguished rank as security for the payment of the money, contrary to every dictate of honour and plighted faith, contrary to the solemn advice of the Double Council, an august assembly at this period in Indian courts, composed of an equal number of Brahmins and Kettris, ranged on each side of the royal throne, to discuss the most arduous and intricate points of jurisprudence, and never summoned together, but in cases of the highest moment, Jeipal refused to pay the stipulated sum, and even imprisoned the heralds of Subuctagi, sent to take charge of it. The monarch of Gazna felt the goad of Mohammedan zeal, which, at least in one instance truly laudable, allows of no idolatrous representation of the Supreme Being, urge him on to mutilate and destroy the multiplied images of deity erected and adored in every quarter of Hindostan; he was not without the passion for spoil of a Tartar commander, but at the same time, he possessed in an eminent degree, the grand principle of honour, which unites, or ought to unite, both nations and individuals in one common bond, never to be forsaken on the one hand, and never infringed on the other. Shall we say, that Jeipal considered his antagonists themselves, as unprincipled marauders, and therefore thought them unworthy the respect due to a generous and civilized enemy? Whatsoever might have been his secret reasons, to his violation of this compact, may justly be ascribed a great part of the severities exercised against his nation, in the course of the succeeding invasions that took place in this reign, and that of the more sanguinary Mahmud.

Fired with indignation, and meditating a severe revenge for the insult, Subuctagi immediately marched with all his forces against Hindostan, where Jeipal, having solicited succours from all the great rajahs from the Indus to the Ganges, to repel the incursions

of a power, armed for their total destruction, had collected together an army of one hundred thousand horse and two hundred thousand foot, headed respectively by the sovereigns of Delhi, Ajmere, Callinger, and Canouge, attended by their tributaries. Subuctagi, at the head of scarcely a fourth of this vast army, from the mountains on his frontier, beheld without dismay, the innumerable columns of the advancing enemy. In a strain of manly and fervid eloquence, he harangued his soldiers, and animated them to glory; he pointed out the immense difference that existed between the hardy native of Afghanistan, and the enfeebled effeminate inhabitant of the Indian plain: though far inferior in number, he maintained that in discipline, in valour, and in strength of arm to draw the bow, and wield the sabre, they were infinitely superior to the foe; he displayed in the most dazzling colours, the beauty and fertility of the country they were about to subdue, and the magnitude of the spoil they were certain to divide. He then allotted their stations to those heroic chieftains on whom he could place the firmest dependence, and dividing his army, which principally consisted of horse, into small squadrons of five hundred each, ordered them to the attack, in succession, so that the main body was never wholly engaged, while the Indian army was perpetually harassed by fresh troops. The Indians advanced to battle on horses very unequal to those that, to the fire and celerity of the Arabian courser, added the sinewy robustness of those accustomed to range the mountains and snuff the invigorating gale of Cabulistan. Battalion upon battalion, though led on to the combat by gallant warriors, accustomed to conquer in equal conflict, on Indian ground, almost as soon as engaged, were broken and dispersed. Nothing is said of elephants on this occasion, nor are any other particulars enumerated in Ferishta, than that wearied out with this novel manner of fighting, and their numerous infantry availing nothing against the shock of the Gaznavian cavalry, the whole army were quickly put to the rout, and fled with precipitation towards the

banks of the Nilab, or Blue River, one of the branches of the Indus. Thither it was pursued by the victorious Moslems; a considerable part of them was cut in pieces, but a far more considerable part perished in attempting the passage of that deep and rapid river. The whole plunder of the Indian camp, immense in the value, number, and variety of the articles acquired, the property of so many sovereign princes, who had left their palaces in full confidence of success, as well as all the territories lying on the west of the Indus, became the reward of the victor, who postponed for the present, his project of penetrating into the interior of India, for the sake of affording succours to the Samanian family of Bokhara, whose throne began to totter under the united effects of diminished authority, and intestine commotions. The narrative of his exploits in this expedition, which engrossed many of the later years of his life, as well as those of the heroic youth, whose Indian conquests are so soon to occupy our attention, fill many pages of the Persian and Arabian historians, and of Ferishta, who copies them; but these, in conformity of my plan of never wandering very widely, for occasional deviations, for the sake of illustrating the events immediately connected with Indian history, must here and there occur, I shall pass over with remarking, that in this and in all his other expeditions, Subuctagi was ultimately successful, and together with Mahmud, returned to Chorasan covered with deserved laurels. After a glorious reign of twenty years, he expired on a journey undertaken for his health, from Balkh to Gazna, in the fifty-sixth year of his age, and of the Hegira 387, or A. D. 997.

* Ferishta, p. 32. et Abulfedæ Annales Muslem. Tom II. p. 597.

CHAPTER III.

MAHMUD, *the Son of Subuctagi, succeeds to the Throne of Gazna—defeats and takes captive his Brother Ismael—subverts the Empire of Bokhara.—His first Indian Expedition; he attacks Peishore, and defeats* JEIPAL, *Prince of Lahore.—*MAHMUD'S *second Expedition; he takes various Towns and Castles on the Western Frontiers.—His third Indian Expedition; Tahera stormed and plundered.—Fourth Indian Expedition; Conquest of Multan, Capital of Sind.—Gazna invaded by the Uzbek King of Bokhara, who is driven back with utter Rout beyond the Oxus.—Fifth Indian Expedition—*MAHMUD *defeats the confederated Rajahs, and marches to Naugracut in the Mountains of Lahore, where he finds immense Treasures.—*GHAUR *attacked and taken.—Sixth Indian Expedition—*MAHMUD *plunders Tannasar—the City of* DELHI *taken.—Seventh Indian Expedition—Cashmire subjugated and plundered.—Eighth Indian Expedition—Conquest of* CANOUGE, *the Capital of Hindostan—the Spoliation of Mathura or Mattra, the Birth-place of* CREESHNA.*—Ninth Indian Expedition, undertaken to defend Canouge against the assailing Rajahs.—Tenth Indian Expedition—the Sack and Plunder of Lahore.—Eleventh Indian Expedition—Attack of the Hill Forts.—Twelfth and final Expedition—Attack and Plunder of Sumnat.—Death and Character of Mahmud.*

THE chapter on which we are about to enter, unfolds to us an awful and afflicting scene. An immense and beautiful country, of which the internal regions had not for ages, felt the ravages of war, utterly desolated and plundered by an unfeeling despot, urged on by a barbarous zeal, to erect the temple of one miserable superstition on the

ruins of another; and to substitute a code of blood and persecution, for one of tranquillity and amiable forbearance. The plunder of every species affirmed, with great appearance of authenticity by the Persian and Arabian historians, who record the dreadful tale, to have been amassed in the course of Mahmud's twelve famous irruptions into Hindostan, is so incalculably vast, that the reader will probably be confounded and staggered by the perusal. Due allowances indeed, must be made for Oriental exaggeration; but no doubt can be entertained, that by means of her vast commerce, uninterruptedly carried on for centuries with all the civilized nations of the earth, devoted to the luxurious and costly productions of her mines, her gardens, and her looms, India might at that period, be justly called the grand treasure-house of the world. Like a fathomless abyss, she ingulphed all and disgorged nothing. In an express Dissertation on the accumulated wealth in bullion and coined money of the ancient world, in the seventh volume of the Indian Antiquities, I pointed out, as introductory to this part of the history, some of the sources and a few of the numerous channels by which this wealth poured, in an inexhaustible current, into that country, and mingled and assimilated with her own.* It fell to the lot of Mahmud and his descendants, to unlock the doors of that treasury so long closed; to burst open its secret vaults; and bid the golden inundation roll back upon the impoverished regions of the exhausted globe.

Through this chapter, Ferishta's history must be our principal guide, at least in those more minute details into which the very interesting events recorded in it, will induce us to enter; but Abulfeda, Al Makin, and the Abridgment of Mirkhond, will supply us with large additional materials, and enable us to correct what may be defective or erroneous in that author.

The valiant Subuctagi left behind him two sons of a very different

* See Indian Antiquities, Vol. VII. p. 547, to the conclusion of the Dissertation.

cast of character, who were in consequence regarded in as different points of view, by their discriminating parent. Generous, politic, and benevolent, Ismael seemed better calculated to govern a great empire in peace, than to direct it amidst the storms of war. Inflamed by the example and habits of his father, the soul of Mahmud delighted in scenes of blood, and with those scenes, it will be seen, the days of his future life were amply gratified. Mahmud had the respect, but Ismael the affection, of his father. At the period of the decease of that father, Mahmud was at a very remote distance, at Nishapore, the capital of Chorasan. Urging the possibility of intestine commotions or foreign usurpation, the artful Ismael had prevailed upon his father, in the last weak moments of expiring life, to suffer him to be invested with the insignia of government, till the return of his elder brother, the only true heir to his crown. Ismael was in consequence publicly and solemnly crowned at Balkh, and he soon prepared to secure by open violence what he had thus obtained by secret fraud. To accomplish this purpose, he unfolded wide the doors of the imperial treasury; distributed ample presents among his principal officers and nobility; entertained the people with magnificent shews, and injudiciously increased the pay and privileges of the soldiers, till he plunged them in insolence and debauchery.

Mahmud, howevern aturally impetuous, and shocked at the treachery of Ismael, had no wish to stain the infancy of his reign with a brother's blood. He therefore dispatched a nobleman properly qualified, to remonstrate with him on his conduct, and to offer him, if he would relinquish all pretensions to a throne to which he had no hereditary claim, the government of Chorasan. But Ismael, deaf to every prudent representation, immediately advanced from Balkh, to decide that claim by arms. Mahmud also, finding pacific measures ineffectual, intrepidly led his troops to the conflict that was to consign him to a throne or a dungeon. Like all fraternal broils, it proved extremely obstinate and bloody; but in the end, the usurper

and his forces were utterly routed, and he himself, with his few adherents, were driven into the castle of Gazna, where they were closely besieged, and soon compelled to surrender. The punishment by this prince, professedly intended for Mahmud, viz. a spacious prison for life, became the merited reward of his unreasonable ambition. The conqueror now ascended his rightful throne, amidst the loudest applauses of those venal courtiers and that fickle multitude who, six months before, had bestowed them on his rival; and the accidental circumstance of a discovery, in the very first month of his reign, of a rich mine of the purest gold, in Sejestan, (said by the Persian *poets*, to have spread its subterranean branches in the form of a large tree,) was considered as an auspicious omen of that astonishing height of splendour and wealth to which he exalted the empire of Gazna.*

Amidst the civil distractions resulting from the contests of the rival brothers, Mansur, the Bokharian sovereign, endeavoured by appointing a new governor for Chorasan, to wrest from both the finest portion of the empire for which they contended. This act of impolitic outrage in the weak representative of the Samanian dynasty, now rapidly hastening to extinction, rouzed the resentment of the sultan, especially as that government had been confirmed as an hereditary *fief*, in compensation for long and important services, by the same prince to his deceased father. Respect, however, for the venerated, though fallen name of Samani, induced him, in the first instance, to try the effect of mild remonstrance; but that and other pacific methods failing, he resolved at once, to crush that shadow of imperial grandeur, and after a prudent disposition of the affairs of his own government, marched, for that purpose, towards the northern frontiers of Chorasan. But the chief officers of the army of the rash prince, his opponent in the field, with the new appointed governor at their head, had rebelliously seized upon the

* Abulfeda, Tom. II. p. 599. Herbelot; Article,—Mahmud. Ferishta, Vol. I. p. 38.

person of Mansur, and putting out his eyes, had elevated to the throne Abdul Rahmid, his younger brother, a mere youth, whom they meant to use as the puppet of their ambition. Guilt, operating together with cowardice, induced the conspirators to retreat before the pursuing bands of Mahmud, till they reached MERU, a city described in a preceding page, where, rather from necessity than inclination, they offered him battle, and were totally defeated with great slaughter, the royal youth being with difficulty carried off, to experience a severer fate at Bokhara. For Elek, the Uzbek king of Cashgar, or little Bokharia, exulting in the opportunity afforded him by the routed army and broken power of a rival monarch, shortly after marched to that capital, seized the castle and palace, and ferociously put to death the last prince of the Samanian dynasty, after it had flourished in the highest state of glory and splendour for nearly one hundred and twenty-seven years. This important event occurred, according to my authorities, in A. H. 388, or A. D. 998.*

Mahmud, inflamed with all the unrelenting bigotry of a true Mussulman, at his accession to the throne of Gazna, had made a solemn vow to Heaven, that if ever he should be blessed with profound tranquillity in his own dominions, he would follow the example of his father, in attacking with his whole force, the idolaters of Hindostan. That period was now arrived. His stern justice and politic wisdom made him respected at home, while his valour and martial skill rendered him dreaded abroad. It was a period of repose and felicity to Gazna; but pregnant with storms and tumults, and dismay to Hindostan. In the year one thousand of the Christian æra commenced the earliest of those TWELVE dreadful irruptions, in which, as is well observed by Mr. Orme, he treated the

* Abulfedæ Annal. Muslem. Tom. II. p. 601, *Hoc anno desiit Samanidarum Potestas.* See also Ferishta, Tom. I. p. 40. His dates are not always accurate; I find it constantly necessary to consult the Persian and Arabian chronologists, who have expressly treated concerning the Moslem events.

unfortunate Indians, "with all the rigour of a conqueror, and with all the fury of a converter;" in which the innumerable symbols erected in their temples and palaces, by a philosophical and ingenious people, intended to represent the deity and his various attributes, but stigmatized by their more pagan invaders, as unmeaning idols, were compelled to bow before the crescent of Mohammed; in which her pagodas, those stupendous structures, supposed too vast to be the labour of mortal hands, and therefore attributed to celestial architects, were defaced, and where practicable, fired or levelled by his desolating arm; and in which her long-accumulated and heaven-devoted treasures were violated and dispersed by a barbarous and rapacious soldiery.

Lahore was the first object of his attack, and of this province, as allusions to it will frequently occur in these pages, the reader will not be displeased with the following short account from the Ayeen Akbery and the Indian Antiquities. Lahoor, or Lahore, is one of the largest, richest, most fertile, and populous provinces of India, and is watered by five large rivers, whence its native name of Panjab, from PANJ, five, and AB, water. Its length given in the Ayeen Akbery, is 180 coss; and its breadth 86, which taking the coss, with Major Rennell, at two British statute miles, makes the former 360, and the latter 172 miles. Its exact boundaries having varied from time to time, under successive conquerors, are not necessary to be assigned in this general sketch. They have, however, been hinted at before. These rivers uniting below Multan, form the Sinde or Indus. Lahore, its capital, is situated in the 31st degree of north latitude; and stands on the banks of the Rauvee, the ancient Hydraotes. It is a city of such great antiquity, that if it be not in reality the Bucephala of Alexander, as has been with reason supposed, it will be extremely difficult to fix for certainty upon its founder; for the Ayeen Akbery is silent on the subject.

Lahore, lying on the direct road that leads into the heart of

Hindostan, has ever been harassed, both in ancient and modern æras, by the armies of contending princes, and has experienced every vicissitude to which the alternate triumph and defeat of the sovereign can subject a capital. From the time of Alexander to the present day, the Panjab has been more deeply stained with blood than any other province of the empire: and the frequent battles that have been fought within its territory, have probably continued to keep alive that ardour of fortitude for which its rajahs, and the subjects under their government, have been ever distinguished. They opposed with vigour the progress of the Macedonian invader, and the generals of Valid were prevented, as we have seen, principally by the valour of those frontier warriors, from penetrating to the Ganges.

By a prince thus resolutely determined on invasion and war, opportunity would soon be found for renewing hostilities with Jeipal, the nearest Indian rajah on his eastern frontier, and the plea of either retarded or diminished tribute, did in fact immediately bring down upon Peishore, a dependency of Lahore, the new sultan of Gazna, at the head of ten thousand of his chosen horse. Jeipal, though he had before been vanquished by Subuctagi, did not decline the contest, but collecting an army of twelve thousand horse and thirty thousand foot, supported by three hundred chain elephants, advanced to give the invader battle. Contempt, either for the youth, or the comparatively small force of Mahmud, or perhaps an ardent ambition to retrieve his former disgrace, might induce the rajah to this imprudent step. The event was, that after an engagement long and obstinately maintained by both parties, Mahmud, notwithstanding the vast inferiority of his army, in point of numbers, was completely victorious, killed five thousand of Jeipal's troops, and took the rajah himself, together with many of his friends and relatives prisoners. Of the immense booty obtained on this invasion; by Mahmud, some faint idea may be formed from this circumstance, that, round the neck alone of the captive sovereign, were found

suspended sixteen strings of jewels, each of which was valued at one hundred and eighty thousand rupees, or about three hundred and twenty thousand pounds sterling. The spoil produced by the capture of the others, and the plunder of the Indian camp, must have been proportionably great. Jeipal, together with his friends and relatives, were at length liberated, on paying a large ransom, and the obligation of an highly increased tribute. Stung with shame and sorrrow, the unhappy and degraded monarch returned to his capital, and there overcome by a tempest of passions, partly impelled by his agitated feelings, and partly in obedience to a custom then prevalent among the Hindoos, which forbad a rajah, who had been twice vanquished by the Mussulmans, longer to hold the reins of government, he resigned the throne to his son. He then ordered a funeral pile to be prepared and kindled, and leaping into the flames, died, according to Hindoo prejudice, as heroically as he had lived.*

The plunder obtained by Mahmud in this his first irruption, was so immense, that, in his second Indian expedition, of which few particulars are recorded, he seems to have had in view, rather the securing than the extending of his newly acquired territory, by directing his arms against those numerous fortified towns and castles on the frontiers of India, that might at any period be able to retard, at least, his conquests, and check the torrent of his impetuous ambition. But these inferior excursions were only intended as introductory to those more important projects, for the consummation of which he was incessantly making the most formidable preparations, and to the consideration of which we now return.

In A. H. 395, answering to A. D. 1004, Mahmud commenced his third Indian expedition, on occasion of the detained tribute and the insolent conduct towards certain of the governors, on the frontier, of an Indian prince, named Bachera, a dependent of Anindpal,

* Ferishta, Vol. I. p. 41, et Abulfedæ ad Hegiram 392 ; or Tom. I. p. 607.

to whom he had also refused to pay the government arrears. The latter might be in too debilitated a condition to enforce that payment, but Mahmud was not thus to be trifled with. The capital of this prince was called TAHERA, and doubtless formed a part of Sind, as it bordered on Multan, but by that name it cannot now be recognised. It is represented to have been fortified with an exceeding high wall, and surrounded with a deep and broad ditch. A chain of posts seems to have guarded the approach to his capital, and the invaded prince is said to have defended himself in them for several days, with uncommon resolution; frequently, and with great slaughter to have repulsed the assailants; and to have driven Mahmud himself almost to the verge of despair. In the end, however, his usual good fortune surmounted every obstacle, and Bachera was compelled to take refuge within the walls of his capital. Mahmud immediately employed his army in the arduous work of filling up the ditch, which after the incessant labour of several days, was nearly accomplished, when the artful rajah, taking advantage of a dark night, by a private gate, led out the greatest part of his army, and encamped in a wood of difficult access on the banks of the Sinde, or Indus. Mahmud, on receiving this intelligence, divided his forces, and detaching the one half to attack Bachera, with the other he himself began an impetuous assault upon the city and castle. In that assault he was completely successful, and became master, in consequence, of all the wealth in bullion, in slaves, and elephants, which Tahera abundantly afforded. That he might not run the hazard of a second campaign as difficult in the passes of Tahera, he annexed that city and its territory for ever to the kingdom of Gazna. In the mean time, great desertion took place among the troops of the rajah; and a small determined band alone remained faithful to his declining cause. Being nearly surrounded by the Gaznavide army, they endeavoured with their swords, to force a passage through the midst of their foes; but their good fortune was

not equal to their bravery, in the attempt they were mostly cut to pieces, or taken prisoners. To avoid the latter fate, Bachera, on the point of meeting it, plunged his sword into his own bosom.* These frequent instances of suicide in the moment of extreme peril, mark the indomitable spirit of the ancient Indian rajahs, and may easily be accounted for, and partly palliated, by the prevailing Indian doctrine of the METEMPSYCHOSIS.

Multan, the capital of Sind, seems to have caught the infection of revolt from one of its inferior cities. Lodi, its former governor, had paid submissive allegiance to Mahmud, on a prior expedition to these parts; but his son Daood, (David) resolutely refused to acknowledge him as his liege sovereign, nor had the example of Bachera subjugated the least effect to bend his haughty soul to obedience. The prince of Lahore too, deriving no lesson of wisdom from the past sufferings of his family, exalted at Peishore the standard of rebellion. On this occasion, commenced Mahmud's fourth Indian expedition; but as this is his first direct attack upon Multan, I shall in this place, and it is a plan I mean generally to follow, when genuine geographical information can be obtained, prefix some little introductory account, principally from the Ayeen Akbery, of that capital, and the province to which it belongs.

Multan and Tattah together form the large province of Sind, a name more generally applied by the Arabian writers, to the vast country extending on each side of the Indus, from its sources to the ocean. The latitude of Multan is 29° 52′. The soobah is in length 433 coss; in breadth 108, but, including Tattah, the additional length to Cutch and Mocran, will measure the enormous line of 660 coss. On the east lies Serhind; the district of Shoor joins it on the north; on the south, it is bounded by the soobah of Ajmeer; on the west are situated Cutch and Mocran, both of which are independent territories. Tattah is watered by the rivers before

* For these events I can alone refer to Ferishta, Vol. I. p. 43.

described in Lahore, which passing through this soobah, unite their streams, and form the Sind. Mountains extend along the north side of this province. It resembles Lahore in many respects; and its fruits are delicious; it has, however, the benefit of but little rain, which seldom falls here; and the heat is excessive. Between Seewee and Bhakor is a large desert, over which, during three of the summer months, there blows the pernicious hot wind, called in Arabia *Semoom*. Only two cities of distinguished eminence are mentioned in this soobah by the Ayeen Akbery; the first is Multan, the capital, one of the most ancient cities of India, and the supposed metropolis of the Malli; and from them probably deriving the name of Multan, or Malli-patan; that is, the city of the Malli. It is described as having a strong castle, and a magnificent pagoda. The second is Bhakor, which is said to have a good fort, and in ancient books to have been called Munsoorah.

Multan contains three sircars, subdivided into eight pergunnahs.

Sircar TATTAH, once an independent territory, but now included in Multan, is of such considerable note, as to be honoured by the secretary of Akber with a longer account than that of the soobah to which it is annexed. Tattah is situated in the second climate; and its capital of the same name, according to our author, is in latitude 24° 10′, but according to Mr. Rennell, in 24° 50′. The winter in this country, says the Ayeen Akbery, is so temperate, that there is no occasion for furs, and the heat of the summer, except in Sewistan, is very moderate. In Tattah are various fine fruits; and the mangoes are remarkably good. A small kind of melon grows wild. Here are also a great variety of flowers; and their camels are much esteemed. The inhabitants travel chiefly by water; they build boats of various construction; and have not less than 40,000 in number. They hunt all kinds of wild animals, and are fond of fishing. The husbandman divides his crops with the government, but is allowed to keep two-thirds. Here are iron mines and salt-pits. The food

of the natives is rice and fish: the former is fine, and in abundance; of the latter a particular kind called pulwa, which comes from the sea into the Indus, is exceedingly delicious. They dry fish in the sun, and make an advantageous trade of it; they also extract oil from fish, which they use in building boats. The mountains of this soobah are numerous, and run in various directions, nourishing on their lofty sides the savage and warlike race of Balloches. They breed horses and camels upon these mountains. One of these tribes is named NOMURDY by Abul Fazil; and as this was part of the tract called by the ancients INDO-SCYTHIA, they cannot be considered otherwise than as the descendants of the Scythian Nomades. The fact is in a manner proved, by the prevalence at this day, of a custom among them, which was peculiar to the natives of ancient Scythia, that of the graziers who inhabit the villages on the banks of the Indus, occasionally changing their position, and wandering with the deviations of the stream.

In very ancient times the capital was Braminabad, which was then a very populous city. We may judge of its magnitude from that of its fort, which is said to have had 1400 bastions, a tenab distant from each other; and of this fortification there are at present considerable vestiges. The ruins of a city supposed to be Braminabad, are still visible, within four miles of Tattah. Tattah is the Daibul of the Persian tables of Sir William Jones, and of the Arabian geographers.

On his march to Multan, Mahmud was attended by an army unusually numerous, and well appointed. He had in the first place, to contend with Annindpal, who had entered into a close confederacy with Daood to oppose his progress, and then with forces diminished by battle and fatigue, he had to fight his way into the well fortified capital of Sind. Both exploits were performed with vigour and celerity. The assembled forces of the son of Jeipal, greatly superior in point of number, but far inferior in regard to valour and discipline, were

so totally routed by the sultan, that he was obliged to fly northward to the Cashmerian mountains for shelter; while, rapidly urging on his victorious career, he reposed not, till the crescent of Mohammed was seen to glitter on its polluted shrines, above the faded crescent of the Indian Seeva. The plunder obtained at Multan was, doubtless, in proportion to the magnitude, the wealth, and immense commerce of the place, but no particulars are stated either in Mirkhond, Ferishta, or any of the Arabian historians of the period. With respect to the rebel Daood, he retired into the vast and woody recesses of Sind, whence he humbly and earnestly solicited the forforgiveness of the sultan, promising, in future, the most implicit obedience to his commands, and offering, at the same time, a very large increase of annual tribute. Mahmud, who had, at least, as much *avarice* as *ambition* in his nature, either *was*, or affected to be, pacified, and returned once more triumphant to Gazna.*

It has already been intimated, that the Uzbek king of Cashgur, or Little Bokharia, had extirpated the Samanian dynasty. Mahmud, struck with the ingratitude of Mansur, observed its extinction with pleasure, had admitted Elek to the honour of his friendship, and had even married that prince's daughter. The perfidious Tartar bursting through all these sacred bonds, during Mahmud's last Indian expedition, had dispatched two armies, one to seize on Balkh, and the other to invade Chorasan. The weakness of those places, from which the sultan, suspecting no injury from a friend and a father, had drawn the greater part of the troops in garrison, to strengthen the southern army, had incited Elek to this base act, but he soon had reason to repent the outrage, for with a velocity as rapid as the swollen Oxus that witnessed it, the legions of Gazna, notwithstanding it was the depth of winter, were instantly transported to the scene of conflict; and, though Elek had called to his aid the potent sovereign of Turkestan, who fought in his army at the head of fifty

* Ferishta, Vol. I. p. 44; Herbelot, Art. Mahmud.

thousand horse, victory declared in favour of Mahmud, of whom the most gallant exertions of personal valour are recorded in this desperate contest. These, however, are foreign to this history, and we return to accompany him on his FIFTH and not the least celebrated of his expeditions to the plains of Hindostan.*

In A. D. 1008, Annindpal, impatient under a foreign yoke, endeavoured to wrest Multan from the grasp of the sultan, which act rouzing the resentment of Mahmud, he prepared again to pour his vengeance on the desolated Panjab. Resolved to perish rather than submit, Annindpal immediately dispatched messengers to all the great rajahs of Hindostan, entreating them once more, to raise their united shields against the grand enemy, whose sacrilegious fury nothing seemed likely to satiate, but the entire downfal of their religion, and the utter extirpation of their race. Instigated by these two-fold considerations, the rajahs of Ugein, Gualior, Callinger, Canouge, Delhi, and Ajmere, names constantly occurring at the head of all the great national confederacies, uniting their forces, advanced, an innumerable body! animated by heroic fortitude, but without a proper head, and destitute of the talents and military tactics of the great Mahmud, towards the sources of the Indus. India, it is said, had not for many centuries beheld so immense a concourse of her sons in arms, all breathing the same spirit, all determined to avenge the insults offered to their gods. Mahmud had encamped on a vast plain, near the confines of Peishore. Opposite to him, and in sight of him also, encamped the Hindoos, who daily became more formidable for numbers and strength. The two armies remained in this situation during forty days; a pause pregnant with solicitude, and full of horror!

Mahmud, whose forces were infinitely inferior in number, beheld without dismay the armed multitudes perpetually increasing, and nearly encircling his veteran bands. He merely adopted the defen-

* Abulfeda, Tom. II. p. 498.

sive measure of strongly entrenching himself in his camp, to avoid the danger and hazard of a general assault without that precaution; at length he commanded a thousand archers to advance in his front, that the foe galled by their arrows, might attack his intrenchments. The project succeeded with a people new to the artifices of Arabian war; for as fast as the Hindoos approached, they were cut down by whole battalions, and though a large body of the more daring among them forced their way into the trenches, and killed several thousand Mussulmen, yet the loss of the latter bore no proportion to the former. This mode of attack continued for a long time, till the enemy being greatly exhausted in strength, as well as greatly reduced in number, began to slacken in the vigour of their assault. Then Mahmud with a great body of Arab and Afghan horse, kept in reserve for the purpose, rushed out from the intrenchments, and began a terrible attack on the weakened foe. An immense slaughter followed, but the enemy was still incalculably numerous, and still unvanquished. Whatever eventual good success might have been the consequence of the martial skill and persevering valour of Mahmud, an accident became greatly instrumental towards turning the fortune of the day. A species of fire weapon seems to have been in use at that time in Asiatic battles, and the sudden explosion of one of those instruments of destruction, close by the elephant on which the prince of Lahore, the generalissimo of the army, rode, having terrified the animal, rendered it utterly ungovernable, and in despite of the utmost exertions of the guide, the irritated animal bore the reluctant rajah precipitately from the field, which gave the appearance of flight to the whole Indian army. For in all battles, fought in that country, it is a circumstance particularly deserving of notice, and it will be often exemplified in the course of this history, that, during the engagement, every eye is fixed on the general, who is usually mounted conspicuous on an elephant most richly decorated, and of uncommon magnitude and ferocity. The sight

of his heroic exertions inspires his troops with sublime confidence; his flight, or capture, plunges them in the deepest despair, and the palm of victory is instantly relinquished to the party that resolutely maintain its ground.* At the sad spectacle, therefore, of their retreating general, the myriads of the Hindoo army imagining themselves deserted by their leader, as rapidly betook themselves to promiscuous flight; nor could the most strenuous efforts of the other chieftains, who saw with inexpressible anguish, the standards of the empire and the banners of religion, alike relinquished to the sacrilegious fury of the foe, prevent their utter discomfiture and dispersion. Mahmud now at the head of all his horse, began a pursuit more bloody, fatal, and prolonged, than even the preceding battle; a pursuit that lasted incessantly for two days, and in that space twenty thousand Hindoos were slaughtered, in addition to the uncounted multitude that perished on the field of battle.† The plunder obtained on this occasion was of the most costly kind, and was in quantity sufficient to load thirty large elephants; while the renown acquired by this glorious action, far surpassed every other consideration, and wafted his triumphant name to the extremities of Asia.

But neither the one nor the other, was able to satiate the boundless ambition and avarice of the sultan. He had heard, that in the territory of Naugracut, a part of the vast chain of lofty mountains that form the northern boundary of Hindostan, of old time had been erected by an ancient and celebrated rajah, of the name of Bimé, a fort, containing a superb temple, consecrated to the idols of the Hindoos, denominated from himself, Bimé, and of almost impregnable strength.

* The great Aurengzebe was so sensible of this, that, in his desperate battle with sultan Dara, he ordered chains to be fastened to the feet of his elephant, to prevent the possibility of retreating.

† Ferishta Vol. I. p. 49. Abulfeda, Tom. II. p. 500. Herbelot, p. 89.

In the Indian Antiquities,* the city of Naugracut has been already mentioned, as having a celebrated college of Hindoo learning, groves of vast extent, and a most frequented and splendid chapel of Hindoo devotion, the very floor of which, according to Mandelsloe,† was covered with plates of gold. The rites, however, it was observed, were somewhat of a sanguinary kind; for, to gain the smile of the stern deity adored there, the infatuated devotees cut out their tongues, as an holy offering, which, according to Abul Fazel,‡ miraculously grew again in the space of two or three days!

The fort of Bimé that protected the district of Naugracut, was built with great labour, on the very summit of the mountain, and in vaults under the sanctuary, as in a place of inviolable security, was deposited the whole collective wealth of the neighbouring principalities, so that in this fort there was supposed to be amassed by the Brahmins, a greater quantity of gold, silver, precious stones, and pearls, than had ever been collected together in the royal treasury of any prince of Asia. Ardent zeal for the propagation of Islamism, not less than impatient avidity of treasures, reputed inestimable, goaded on Mahmud, to attempt the capture of this important place. The greater part of the numerous garrison had descended to join their comrades in arms, and had been defeated with them in the late fatal engagement. Before they could recover from their confusion, or any fresh troops could be thrown into the fortress, Mahmud, after his recent pursuit of the flying foe, hurrying thither with the utmost expedition, caused the place to be invested on every side, sending at the same time detachments to scour the surrounding country, and lay waste every thing with fire and sword. Notwithstanding these formidable preparations, the Brahmins who presided in it, and who kept watch day and night over their hoarded treasures, resolutely determined, with the remainder of the garrison, to

* Indian Antiquities, Vol. II. p. 162. † Mandelsloe apud Harris, Vol. II. p. 120. ‡ Ayeen Akbery, Vol. II. p. 133.

hold out against the conqueror of the united forces of India; they thought the place sufficiently defended by its hitherto unviolated sanctity, and that the thunderbolt of the avenging Seeva could not possibly sleep, while an alien usurper was threatening the sacred, the concentrated property of his august temples. In despite of their prayers and anathemas, Mahmud carried on his works with vigour and effect, and it was not till inevitable destruction awaited their farther resistance, that they submissively requested permission to capitulate. Their request was granted, and lenient terms proffered, if they immediately opened the gates. Those gates, never before unfolded to admit unhallowed feet, soon flew open to receive within their precincts the sultan of Gazna and the chief officers of his army, who entering, beheld with equal astonishment, the strength and riches of that sacred and elevated retreat. In the sanctuary of Bimé were found treasured up, seven hundred thousand golden dinars, seven hundred maunds* of gold and silver plate, forty maunds of pure gold in ingots, two thousand maunds of silver bullion, and twenty maunds of various jewels set, which had been collecting from the time of Bimé.† With this enormous treasure, the king returned to Gazna, where, at a magnificent festival, he displayed his wealth to the people in golden thrones, and other rich ornaments, in a vast plain without the city, and distributed a portion of it in princely presents to his generals, principal omras, and bravest soldiers. In each of the preceding invasions, independent of the destruction and mutilation of temples and idols, which to the Hindoos was worse than death, the inhabitants themselves were every where compelled to acknowledge the sacred mission of Mohammed, and those who refused this test of obedience, were, for the most part, either wantonly massacred, or doomed to perpetual slavery in a foreign country.

The year of Christ 1009, is famous for Mahmud's conquest of

* A maund is about forty pounds weight. † Ferishta's Hist. Vol. I. p. 65. Herbelot, p. 96.

the principality of Gaur, which I should pass over as irrelevant, did not that principality give birth to a race of conquerors who afterwards conquered both Gazna and Hindostan. Its geographical situation, amidst the loftiest eminences of Paropamisus, has been already described. It was inhabited by the fiercest tribes of Afghan warriors, who had never yet been subjected to the controul of any foreign power. Secure, as they thought, in their hilly and almost impenetrable fortresses, they bade defiance to invasion, and at the same time, committed the most cruel depredations on all the kingdoms that verged upon their frontier. An insult of this kind excited against their prince, by name Mohammed, the inflamed resentment of the monarch of Gazna, who, besides, thought it worthy of himself, to attempt what nobody had yet dared, and effect what was thought impossible. Ten thousand hardy veterans were opposed to him on the soil which had been drenched with the blood, and consecrated by the sepulchres of their valiant forefathers from the foundation of empires in Asia. Their generous posterity did not degrade their manes, but rushed to battle with the fury of the noble animal that, like themselves, is born and nurtured amid the recesses of the forest. From morning to noon, says the Persian author, the flames of war raged, and justice was done to valour on both sides. Driven at length by the superior number of their adversaries, within their intrenchments, there the troops of Gaur for a long time kept at bay the assailing foe, till Mahmud sounding a retreat, as if wearied out, and in despair of victory, allured them to pursue his flying army into the adjacent plains. At a certain point the fugitives were commanded to halt, when suddenly facing about, they renewed the attack with redoubled fury, and snatched the plume of victory from the fancied invincible. The sovereign of Gaur was on this occasion taken prisoner, and brought into the presence of the sultan; but that prince was insensible of the disgrace; for disdaining the chains of captivity, he had swallowed a subtle poison which he always kept

about him, concealed in his ring, and expired almost immediately. Gaur henceforth, became for a period, an appendage to the empire of Gazna; but, in the lapse of years, her ancient spirit, with her ancient dynasty, revived; she inflicted upon her conquerors a severe retaliation, and at length the young vulture, with her ensanguined talons, tore out the heart and entrails of the eagle of Gazna.*

In A. D. 1011, Mahmud commenced his sixth Indian expedition, being his second into Hindostan Proper, in which the venerated city of Tannasar, and the great and imperial city of Delhi felt the scourge of foreign invasion. Of the former of these two celebrated places, the following is a concise description. Tannasar, the Tanasis of Ptolemy's geography, a circumstance which fully marks both its antiquity and celebrity, is situated in the soobah of Delhi, to the west of that city, and distant from it about thirty miles. It is, says the Ayeen Akbery, held sacred by the Hindoos. The river Sirsutty, to which they pay profound adoration, runs near it; and in its vicinity is the sacred lake of Koorkhet. This region was the scene of the Mahabbarut, or the great war, and the city of Hustnapore, that formerly stood here, was the imperial residence of rajah Bharat, a prince renowned for justice and love of his subjects, and the first universal sovereign of Hindostan.† Those who know the devotion paid by the Hindoos to all the places consecrated by the exploits of their avatars and most ancient kings of the solar dynasty, will not wonder at their extreme veneration for Tannasar. Mahmud indeed, had heard that it was holden in the same sacred light by them, as Mecca itself was by the Mussulmen; that it was full of temples and idols, and overflowed, like Bimé, with consecrated wealth; the accumulated offerings of piety, through a long succession of ages. The presiding deity, amidst a thousand inferior satellites, of this consecrated recess, was denominated Jug Soom, perhaps

* Ferishta, Vol. I. p. 51. Abulfeda, Tom. II. p. 530.

† Ayeen Akbery, Vol. II. p. 97.

synonimous with SOMA, the Sanscreet name of the MOON,) and the Brahmins vaunted, that their Jug Soom was of an antiquity superior to the existing world.

The route of Mahmud lay immediately through the territories of Annindpal, whom, after conquering, he had admitted to the honour of an alliance with the empire of Gazna. The king therefore sent to require of that rajah, that during his march, every duty of a faithful ally should be performed; guards provided for the protection, and necessaries for the support, of his army. The pious rajah equally zealous to preserve, as Mahmud was eager to destroy, the hallowed temples and city of Tannasar, in vain endeavoured to avert his fury by the proffer of a number of elephants and bullion, and jewels to a great amount. Mahmud remained inexorable, and Annindpal was obliged to contribute to the downfal of idolatry, by furnishing the escort and provisions demanded by the invader. The answer returned to his humble expostulation by the Gaznavian emperor, deserves to be recorded, as it gives us ingenuously the principles by which both himself, Gengis, Timur, and all the tribe of Indian invaders were guided in their various devastations of the finest and most fertile region of the earth. That answer was as follows: "That in the Mussulman religion it was an established maxim, that the more the glory of the prophet was exalted, and the more his followers exerted themselves in the subversion of idolatry, the greater would be their reward in Heaven. That therefore, it was his firm resolution, with the assistance of God and the prophet, to root out the abominable worship of idols from the face of the country of Hindostan. To spare Tannasar, one of the most venerated recesses of Hindoo superstition, would be to trample on the most sacred mandate of the Coran."*

Annindpal, smarting under recent defeat, was reluctantly compelled to submit; but when this intelligence reached the rajah of

* Ferishta, Vol. I. p. 52.

Delhi, under whose more immediate protection Tannasar flourished, he instantly dispatched heralds to every province of Hindostan, summoning his brother rajahs once more to the field, and conjuring them to attempt at least, to preserve from profanation and robbery, the last ancient sanctuary of the gods of India. In the mean time, Mahmud's innumerable army was rolling on, like a vast inundation, to overwhelm it; and so rapid was its progress, that before any considerable body of troops could be assembled to oppose him, it arrived before its walls, and blockaded every avenue into the city. Better calculated for the practice of sacred rites, than formed for military defence, Tannasar unsuccoured, was quickly compelled to surrender, and in the space of a few hours, the astonished eye beheld the same city towering in grandeur, in beauty, and in unrivalled opulence, and, by the ravages of a merciless soldiery, reduced to the lowest state of desolation, distress, and poverty; its lofty palaces and venerable shrines plundered and defaced; and the splendid images that decorated the walls of the latter, arrayed in the sumptuous dresses of avatars, torn down, stript, and, when not fabricated of the precious metals, hewed to pieces, and thrown with every concomitant mark of disgrace and infamy on the highway. With respect to the great idol JUG SOOM himself, in proportion to his pre-eminence, he was treated with superior contempt and indignity; and that not the smallest remnant of his venerated image might exist in Hindostan, to excite anew the flame of idolatrous devotion, he was sent captive to Gazna, where after being publicly decapitated, his mutilated limbs were scattered through the streets and highways of that populous city, and trampled under the feet of devout Mussulmen. A far greater number of jewels, but less bullion was found in this city than in Bimé; and, among the former, a ruby was discovered of such enormous magnitude, as appears almost incredible.*

* Ferishta, Vol. I. p. 53.

The rajah of Delhi, by endeavouring, though fruitlessly, to excite all the powers of Hindostan to arm against Mahmud, having, in fact, declared war against him, the sultan immediately commenced his march for that capital; but as the soobah, and in particular the CITY of Delhi, will engross much of our attention in the subsequent pages, I shall present the reader, in this place, from the Ayeen Akbery, and other historical and geographical sources which I had occasion to consult, when engaged in writing the Indian Antiquities, with an account sufficiently ample to enable him to visit them again, as he often must, without finding himself entirely in a strange country.

This soobah, according to the Ayeen Akbery, is situated in the third climate.* Its greatest length is there stated at 165 coss, reckoning the Indian coss, as mentioned before, at two British statute miles; and its extreme breadth at 140 coss. On the east lies Agra; on the north are mountains; on the south the boundaries are Agra and Ajmeer; and Lodyaneh confines it on the west. The principal rivers are the Ganges and the Jumna. The climate is very temperate. Most of the lands are inundated during the periodical rains. Some places in it are said to produce three harvests in a year. In this soobah grow most of the fruits of Persia, Tartary and Hindostan, with an infinite variety of the loveliest flowers. Throughout its whole extent are interspersed many magnificent buildings of stone and brick; and it is stored with the productions of every part of the globe. A part of the northern mountains of this soobah is called Kamaoon, in which are mines of gold, lead, silver, iron, copper, orpiment, and borax. Here is also found abundance of musk-deer, SILK-WORMS, falcons of various kinds, and plenty of honey.†

The city of Delhi, according to Ferishta, was founded by DELU, the usurper of the throne of Western Hindostan, about 300 years before the commencement of the Christian æra; but, according to the

* The climates will be explained hereafter. † Ayeen Akbery, Vol. II. p. 95.

more probable account of the volume just cited, Aurungpaul, of the Tenore tribe, was its real founder, probably on the ruins of a more ancient metropolis, in the year 429 of the æra of Bickermajit, an æra not greatly dissimilar from that of Christ. It was for a series of ages governed by its own rajahs, who seem to have had considerable weight in the empire, and to have been very active in repelling both the ancient Persian and Tartar invaders of Hindostan. They were descended from, and were for some time tributary to, the great rajahs of Lahore, of the race of BAL, or PAUL, (as the word is sometimes written, the letters B and P being interchangeable in most Oriental dialects,) a name celebrated for valour in the heroic histories of the country: this family is denominated Jeipal by Ferishta, but Gebal by D'Herbelot, from other Moslem historians. By this appellation the latter distinguishes* *"le plus puissant roi de l'Indostan;"* and in another place calls him, though erroneously, for the Canouge sovereigns were both greater and wealthier, *"Bal, fils d'Andbal, (Annindpal) estimé le plus riche et le plus puissant roi de* TOUT L'INDOSTAN." I think there can hardly be a doubt, when we consider their great military fame and their place of residence, but that this long, hereditary, and illustrious race of Bal, was the same as that of Porus, so often mentioned by classical writers. Twenty princes of this line are particularly said, in the Ayeen Akbery, to have enjoyed in regular succession, for 437 years, the throne of Delhi, not yet imperial. An extensive territory to the north and south of Delhi was subject to the controul of its rajah, since we read in Ferishta, that the ancient and hallowed cities both of Tannasar and Muttra, or Mathura, (the Methora of Pliny,) situated only thirty-six miles north of Agra, and still a considerable city, were under his jurisdiction and protection. The last of its native princes, according to the Ayeen Akbery, was Pithowra,† from

* Bibliotheque Orientale, p. 534

† Consult the curious fragment of Provincial Indian History relative to this prince, in the Ayeen Akbery, and inserted in page 164 preceding of the present volume.

whose family (a little to anticipate the future history) it was conquered by the Mohammedan slave Cuttub, or Cothbedden Ibek, as he is called by Herbelot, who made Delhi the capital of the vast empire which he established in Hindostan. The prince from whom it was immediately taken is said, by Ferishta, to have been called Candi; and, in corroboration of his assertion, in Marco Polo's Indian Travels, I find mention made of a rajah of the same name, who is affirmed to have been the chief of the four great kings who then reigned in the Peninsula. Candi lost his throne nearly at the expiration of the twelfth century:* Marco Paulo visited India about the middle of the thirteenth century; and it is not improbable that the exiled family, though unable to oppose the torrent of Mohammedan success, might still retain sufficient vigour and resources to secure a respectable territory in the southern regions of that extensive country.

On this subject, let me not forget to remark, that the Asiatic Researches contains a deed, or grant of land, bearing date twenty-three years before the commencement of the Christian æra, of one of the rajahs of this very name, who is styled Deb Paul Deb, equally instructive to the historian, and interesting to the antiquary. Among much other curious and useful information, this Paul is said to have been the son of Dharmo Paul, who married the daughter of a celebrated rajah called Poro Bal; and the union of two such words in the same name, and *that* the name of a rajah of Delhi, will, I hope, rescue my former conjecture that Porus was of this dynasty, from any severe animadversion.

The city of Delhi according to the Ayeen Akbery, is situated in latitude 28° 37′; but, according to Major Rennell's more correct geography, in 31°. If we may believe the Mahabbarat, it stands upon the site of the most ancient city of Inderput, in times

* See his Travels, or at least the best Analysis of them, in Campbell's edition of Harris, Vol. I. p. 261.

justly reputed fabulous, the metropolis of the country. The Ayeen Akbery, however, confirms this account, expressly asserting that Delhi is a very ancient city, "and was formerly called Inderput." Delhi rose to renown as the glory of Canouge declined. Its consequence as an imperial city increased with that of the Mohammedan dynasty, which bears its name, and it continued to flourish as one of the most splendid cities of Asia, and after the total decay of Canouge as the unrivalled metropolis of Hindostan, under all the sultans of the Gaznavide, the Gauride, and Charazmian dynasties. Each successive monarch adorned this envied city with some signal memorial of royal magnificence; it was surrounded with beautiful gardens and aromatic groves; and was filled with innumerable edifices, erected for the purposes of commerce, appropriated to the diffusion of science, or devoted to the sanctities of religion.*

Against this great capital and its patriotic rajah, Mahmud now directed the vengeance of a victorious army, and thirty intervening miles were past with a celerity proportionate to the ardour of his high-raised expectations, and the magnitude of the expected spoil. The rapidity of his march and the vigour of his attack rendered all opposition fruitless; one of the strongest castles, and the most sumptuous palaces of India, received within their spacious inclosures, a foreign lord; and the citizens of that proud metropolis, beheld with horror the barbarous standard of Arabia flying from their lofty summits, above the insulted banners of the preserving Veeshnu. As the successive bands of armed plunderers ranged through the

* For a more extended and comprehensive account of Delhi and its varied fate, down to the middle of the eighteenth century, the reader will please to consult INDIAN ANTIQUITIES, Vol. I. p. 200.

I request permission in this place, to inform the public, that the early volumes of that work have been, at a heavy expense, reprinted, to make up sets, which may now be had complete, at Mr. White's in Fleet-street. The sixth, and the seventh, volumes may also still be had separately; very many of these two *final volumes* still remain on hand.

apartments of the rajah's splendid abode, enriched with all that the mines and the looms, and the genius of India could afford to decorate them, as they tore down the gold brocade and embroidered tapestry that lined the walls, and the plates of silver that covered the cielings, they felt no sentiment of compunction or pity; the solid weight and sterling value of the spoil amassed, alone occupied their consideration; and Mahmud himself was so delighted with the place, that he reluctantly yielded back the sceptre to the vanquished rajah upon the usual terms of paying an annual tribute; he wished to annex that rich soobah and city wholly and for ever to the crown of Gazna; but he was informed by his courtiers, that till the turbulent line of princes that reigned in Lahore, and lay between Delhi and his northern dominions, were extirpated, and Multan also completely subjugated, it would be impossible for him to keep the undisturbed possession of the rajahship of Delhi. Mahmud assented to the truth and justice of these representations, and resolved immediately on the total subjugation and expulsion of the sovereigns of those places; but Annindpal, as artful as he was brave, on the sultan's arrival in his territory, with that intent, found means, by rich presents, soothing speeches, and the most generous hospitality, to divert him from his hostile purpose, and the army tranquilly bent its course towards Gazna, incumbered with forty thousand captives and other species of wealth, in number and value almost defying computation.*

Mahmud seems to have inviolably adhered to the amicable compact entered into with Annindpal, till the death of that prince, about two years afterwards, when we find him engaged in strenuous war with Pitteru-Jeipal, who had succeeded to the rajahship of Lahore, and besieging a fort of the name of Nindoona, belonging to that rajah, and said to have been situated in the mountains of Belnat, but neither the one nor the other, is to be found, at least under those

* Ferishta, Vol. I. p. 53.

appellations in the map and Memoir of Major Rennell. The new rajah, not daring to face in the field the disciplined and veteran troops of Gazna, after leaving a strong garrison in the fort to amuse the sultan, retired towards Cashmere, in the mountains of which secluded region, he hoped to be secure from molestation; but Mahmud, after taking and plundering Nindoona, pursued thither the fugitive rajah, and compelled him to take shelter among the still higher mountains of the great northern range that forms the boundary of that soobah towards Tartary. But of Cashmere, that terrestrial paradise, and so attractive to Mahmud, as to be the object of a second invasion, two years afterwards, it is necessary that something introductory should be premised for the information of those of my readers who may not be conversant in the geography of this part of Asia.

Cashmere is represented in the Ayeen Akbery, as extending 120 coss in length, and as being from ten to twenty-five coss in breadth: but Major Rennell inclines to think these lines of demarcation greatly exaggerated; and from Mr. Forster's route and more correct judgment, states it to be only eighty miles in length, forty in breadth, and of an oval form.

Relative to this delightful and extraordinary valley of Cashmere, shut in on every side by vast mountains, the same book abounds with such ardent expressions of admiration, that we are induced really to suppose it to be what by Eastern writers it is often called, the Paradise of the Indies. It is there called a garden in perpetual spring; and the surrounding mountains, those stupendous fortifications with which nature has furnished it, are said to be of an astonishing height, so that its grand and romantic appearance cannot fail of delighting those who are fond of variety, as well as those who take pleasure in retirement. The water is remarkably good, and the cataracts are numerous and magnificent. Violets, roses, narcissuses, and innumerable other flowers, grow wild in Cashmere.

The spring and autumn display scenes enchantingly beautiful. It has plenty of excellent fruits, especially melons, apples, peaches, and apricots; and the rain descends not in a deluge, as in other parts of Hindostan, but in light and genial showers. Amidst these advantages, however, they are not free from the dreadful calamity of frequent earthquakes; on which account they do not build their houses with brick and stone, but of wood, with which the country abounds.

In Cashmere are various manufactures of wool, particularly of shawls, which are carried to all parts of the globe; and of silk, which occasions the general cultivation of mulberry trees, not so much for the fruit as for the leaves, on which the silk-worms feed. They live chiefly upon rice, fish, (either fresh or dried,) and vegetables. Of animals, they have a species of sheep called Hundoo, whose flesh is exceedingly delicious and wholesome. They have horses, small but hardy; and cows black and deformed, but yielding plenty of good milk. They breed neither elephants nor camels; and they have neither snakes, scorpions, nor other venomous reptiles.

Sirrynagur is mentioned as the capital of Cashmere in Akber's time, and it is said for ages to have been in a flourishing state. The name of Sirrynagur has since been exchanged for that of the province, and the modern capital of Cashmere is described by Mr. Forster, the last English visitor, as a large city built on each side of the Chelum, the ancient Hydaspes, which rolls through the centre of the valley, whose whole extent, according to tradition, it anciently overspread in the form of a vast lake. It is situated in latitude 33° 49′: its longitude is 73° 11′.*

The account, in Ferishta, of the campaign in Cashmere, is very summary, and unsatisfactory. In the plain country Mahmud could not possibly meet with opposition; like his predecessors, in

* Ayeen Akbery, Vol. I. p. 135. Major Rennell's Memoir, p. 104.

the beautiful Sogd of Samarcand, he let his destroying legions loose in that delicious recess, and spread slaughter and devastation through the whole of the happy valley, while the trumpets of Gazna sounded aloud to the affrighted inhabitants the dreadful tidings of "the CORAN OR SLAVERY." His efforts to reduce the fortresses erected by the policy of its ancient kings, on the lofty mountains that overlook and in part command it, were not, in the first instance, successful; but of every thing of value, he plundered the unfortunate city and people of Cashmere, and returned with that additional spoil to Gazna. He is said, however, on account of the rebellion of certain chiefs, and for the purpose of reducing the forts that still held out, to have returned thither in A. D. 1012, when those chiefs were cut off, and all but one hill fort, called LOKOTE, of uncommon height and strength, were compelled to yield to his superior military genius. In fruitless endeavours to obtain possession of LOKOTE, he wasted the whole summer of that year; and, on the approach of winter, was compelled to return, baffled, and greatly disconcerted, to his capital. To add to his chagrin, by the accidental, or voluntary error of his guides, in that return, his army was led astray into a watery morass of great extent, whence it was with the greatest difficulty extricated, and with the loss of considerable numbers of men.

In A. D. 1016, Mahmud, having bestowed his sister in marriage on the sovereign of Charazm, and that sovereign being shortly afterwards murdered in an insurrection of certain turbulent chieftains in his service, the sultan marched with the utmost expedition, towards the capital of that kingdom, and after one or two bloody conflicts with the insurgents, in which they met the merited fate of rebellion, seized on the crown, which he claimed by the twofold right of conquest and marriage. Thus, having already given a king to Bokharia, he became the complete master of all the vast province of Transoxiana, as well as part of Turkestan, with whose hardy and valiant progeny he doubtless recruited his victorious

squadrons, exhausted with continual warfare, and debilitated with incessant fatigue.

From whatever quarter collected, in A. D. 1018, an army, consisting of not less than one hundred thousand chosen horse, and thirty thousand foot, attended him on his eighth Indian expedition, in which he directed the whole force of his immense empire against Canouge, at that time the proud metropolis of all Hindostan. The riches and magnificence of Delhi doubtless excited Mahmud to this bold and hazardous attempt, for Canouge was distant from Gazna a three months march, and seven great rivers, the principal branches that composed the Indus, rushed across the path that led to that remote capital.

But, as we are now entering upon the history of events in a division of India which we have not recently visited, that division which the Arabian geographers call MABER, or *the Passage*, by which they understand the vast tract formerly composing the empire of the Prasii, and Gangaridæ, and extending from the gulph of Bengal, on both sides of the Ganges, as far northward as the Sewalic mountains, it is necessary that we should take a previous concise geographical survey of the ground to which we are about to attend the army of Mahmud.

The tract in question comprehended many great and wealthy provinces, Oude, Bengal, Bahar, Allahabad, and a considerable portion of Agra, in which province, according to the Ayeen Akbery, Canouge stands, though formerly it conferred its name upon the kingdom of which it was the capital, and Agra was included in it. Of the four former of these rich and fertile provinces, I shall, chiefly from that book, present the reader with a summary account, deferring an account of Agra till a later period, when we must again visit this interesting region. Interesting to Britons, indeed, it cannot fail to prove, since the whole of this vast tract, watered by the Ganges, from its entrance into the plains of Hindostan to the ocean

itself, an extent, according to Major Rennell, of above thirteen hundred-and fifty miles, is in the possession of the British nation, and its immediate allies, or tributaries.*

I begin with the province of OUDE, because, in the Mahabbarat translated by the secretary of Akber, the first imperial city of Hindostan is stated to have been OUDE, its capital, and we are informed that it was built by Krishna, one of their earliest sovereigns; that is to say, it is so ancient a city, that the Hindoos are obliged to go for its origin to fabulous times. That ancient city, says Sir William Jones, in the Asiatic Researches,† extended, if we may believe the Bramins, over a line of ten yojans, or about forty miles; and the present city of Lucknow was only a lodge for one of its gates. It is supposed to have been the birth-place of Rama. This soobah, according to the Ayeen Akbery, has Bahar on the east; on the north it is bounded by mountains; by Manickpoor on the south; and on the west by Canouge. Its length is stated at 135 coss, and its breadth at 115 coss. The Gogra, the Gounty, and the Sy, are its principal rivers. The water and air are good, and the seasons are temperate. Agriculture in this soobah is in high perfection. Some particular kinds of rice growing in it are represented as incomparable for whiteness, delicacy, and flavour. The crops are sown three months earlier than in any other part of Hindostan, and the stalks are said to rise as fast as the innundating water. From the northern mountains are imported a number of curious articles of commerce: among these are specified, musk, chook, (an acid mixture of lime and lemon-juice boiled to a consistence,) tincar, civet, zedoary, redwood, asafœtida, and amber. In return, the traders in these articles carry back earthen ware. Lucknow is represented as being the principal city, pleasantly situated upon the banks of the Gounty, with very delightful suburbs. The whole province is a vast plain, through which the Ganges majestically

* Rennell's Memoir, p. 116. † Asiatic Researches, Vol. I. p. 259.

glides, and occupies the central part of the ancient kingdom of the Prasii.

BENGAL is bounded on the south by the bay to which it gives its name; on the north by mountains; Arracan and Tipra are on its eastern frontier; and on the west it has Bahar. The Ayeen Akbery states it to be 400 coss in length, and 209 in breadth; but as its limits have varied under successive princes, according to their moderate or inflamed passion for conquest and dominion, no dependence can be placed on these lines of demarcation. This province for fertility has been justly compared to Egypt. Canals cut from the Ganges and its branches, every where intersect it, and diffuse verdure and plenty through its whole extent.

The air of Bengal is comparatively temperate. The periodical rains commence in April, and continue for somewhat more than six months; during this season, the low-lands are sometimes entirely overflowed. We are informed in a note, that the frequent storms of thunder, lightning, wind, and rain, from the north-west, which precede the setting in of the periodical rains, contribute very much to moderate the heat; that those rains more generally commence in the beginning of June; and that if they break up early in September, the weather is intensely hot, and the inhabitants are very sickly.

This soobah abounds with rivers, the noblest of which is the Gung, or Ganges. The learned among the Hindoos have composed volumes in praise of the Ganges, all parts of which are said to be holy; but some particular places are esteemed more so than others. The great people have the water of this river brought to them from vast distances, it being esteemed necessary in the performance of certain religious ceremonies. The water of the Ganges has been celebrated in all ages, not only for its sanctity, but also on account of its sweetness, lightness, and salubrity, and because it does not become putrid, though kept for years.

Most of the rivers of Bengal have their banks cultivated with rice, of which there is a variety of species. The soil is so fertile in some places, that a single grain of rice will yield a measure of two or three seer.* Some lands will produce three crops in a year. Vegetation is here so extremely quick, that as fast as the water rises the plants of rice grow above it, so that the ear is never immersed. The food of the inhabitants consists for the most part of fish and rice. Their houses are chiefly made of bamboos, some of them very expensive and very durable. They travel chiefly by water, especially in the rainy season; and they construct boats for war, burthen, and travelling. Horses are very scarce. In some parts of this soobah are manufactured hempen carpets, so beautiful that they seem to be made of silk. Diamonds, emeralds, pearls, agates, and cornelians, are brought from other countries to the sea-ports of Bengal. Their flowers and fruits are fine and in plenty.

GAUR, the Gangia Regia of Ptolemy, 750 years before Christ was the capital of this soobah. It stood on the Ganges, but has, in the long lapse of time, been deserted by that river, which probably occasioned its gradual decay. Its stupendous ruins cover a tract fifteen miles in length and three in breadth. Several villages occupy a part of its site; the remainder is covered by thick forests, the haunt of tigers. Major Rennell enumerates a mosque lined with black marble, and two lofty and magnificent gates of its ruined citadel, as the principal remaining monuments of its ancient grandeur. I need not particularize any other cities in this soobah, as those among them now most celebrated, have been erected posterior to Mahmud's invasion. They will be noticed in succeeding pages.

BAHAR, says the Ayeen Akbery, is situated in the second climate. To explain this, I should have before remarked, that the Eastern geographers divided the habitable parts of the globe into *seven* climates, according to their proximity or remoteness from the equator.

* The seer is a measure equal to two pounds averdupois.

Modern geographers, however, enumerate thirty climates. It is stated to be bounded, at least in Akber's time, on the east by Bengal; by Allahabad and Oude on the west; and on the north and south by great mountains. Its length is given as 120 coss, and its breadth from Tirhoot to the northern mountains 110 coss; but, as I before remarked, in the fluctuation of the limits of Eastern dominion, these measures are little to be depended upon.

Its principal rivers are the Ganges and the Soane. The Soane, the Nerbuddah, and the Chelum, all three spring from one source, near Kurrah. The water of the Soane is cool, pleasant to the taste, and wholesome; having run to the south as far as Muneah, it then unites with the Ganges. The river Gunduk comes from the north, and empties itself into the Ganges near Hajeepoor. The summer months here are very hot; but the winter is very temperate. The rains continue six months. The country is continually covered with verdure, and the soil is so hard, that, during the stormy winds that blow here, you are not much incommoded with the dust. Agriculture is in the highest perfection, the rice being so excellent, and of such a variety of species, as are no where to be equalled. Sugar-cane is cultivated in great abundance and in high perfection. Mughee is that species of the beetle-leaf which is most esteemed; it is of a very thin and delicate texture, of a fragrant smell, with a beautiful colour, and the flavour is delicious.

Most of the houses in this province are described as roofed with tiles, and the inhabitants are reported to be famous for building boats and for the manufacture of gilded glass: they have good elephants in plenty; but horses and camels are scarce. Bahar is famous for parrots, goats, fighting-cocks, "remarkable for affording great sport," and great variety of hawks.

In sircar Mungheer, a stone wall is mentioned as extending from the Ganges to the mountains, and forming the boundary between Bengal and Bahar. In sircar Bahap is Gaya, famous as a place of

Hindoo worship, and called, from Brahma, Brahm-Gaya. Tirhoot, which Sir W. Jones mentions, on the authority of some information received in India, as the supposed residence of a colony of priests from Egypt, is asserted to have been from old time the residence of Hindoo learning; and this assertion renders that circumstance highly probable. The water and air of Tirhoot are much celebrated; and it has delightful groves of orange-trees, extending thirty coss, not ill calculated to promote the purposes of science and encourage meditation. The next remarkable place mentioned in Bahar is the strong fortress of Rhotas, situated upon a lofty mountain of most difficult access, and fourteen coss in circumference. The inclosed land is cultivated; and within this space are many springs: water may be procured in any part by digging three or four ells below the surface of the earth.

The soobah of Allahabad is also represented as situated in the second climate. In length it is 160 coss, in breadth 122 coss. To the east it has Bahar; to the north Oude; Bundhoo lies on the south, and Agra on the west. Its principal rivers are the Ganges and the Jumna. It produces variety of fruits, flowers, and excellent plants; has abundance of melons and grapes, and is well stocked with game. Agriculture is in great perfection; and the inhabitants fabricate some beautiful species of cloths, and have a manufacture of woollen carpets. Allahabad, the ancient name of which was Piyaug, is the capital city of this soobah. Akber gave it the former name, and built at the point of the conflux of the Ganges and Jumna, a prodigious fortress of stone, in which are many magnificent edifices. Benares is specified by the name of Baranassey, as a large city situated between two rivers, the Birnah and the Assey, whence probably its former appellation is derived; but its most ancient names were Varanes and Kasi. It is built in the form of a bow, of which the river Ganges resembles the bow-string. Its temple, before defaced by Aurengzeb, was as celebrated throughout Hindostan, and

as much resorted to as Mecca is by the Mohammedans. It is the ancient seat of Hindoo learning, as well as religion.*

Jionpoor is, (or rather *was* in Akber's time,) the next city in magnitude, and Chunar is described as a stone fort of incomparable strength, situated upon a lofty hill, at whose foot flows the Ganges. Callinger is a fortress still stronger and more celebrated. Within the compass of its walls are many springs and lakes, and many temples devoted to idolatry. Ebony, and a variety of wild fruits, are found here; in its neighbourhood there is a diamond mine; and twenty coss from the fort, small diamonds are sometimes found. Jeipal's burning himself, and the cause of it, have been already mentioned: another instance of a rajah's devoting himself to the same mode of destruction, occurs in the Ayeen Akbery's account of Callinger, with this difference, that the former put an end to his existence because his reputation was lost, the latter from the fear of losing it.

The modern city of Patna, is supposed to stand on the site of Palibothra, anciently called by the natives Pataliputra; Mr. Wilford however, contends, that Raj-mahal occupies that site; D'Anville supposed Palibothra to be the same city as Halabass, or Allahabad; and Rennell with great reason, once conjectured it to be Canouge. From the whole country being in Sanscreet called PRACHI, or *the East*, was doubtless derived the Latin name of Prasii, and it is said to have included Bengal, denominated in Sanscreet, Gancara-desa, whence Gangarides. Amidst this uncertainty of the best Geographers, it is not of so much consequence to the reader, little accustomed to investigations of this abstruse nature, to know where this renowned city was situated, as *what* it was; *what* was the capital, how magnificent, how extensive the great empire on the

* See the description of its most famous pagoda, and of all the more celebrated Indian pagodas, in Indian Antiquities, Vol. III. p. 20, of the new and more correct edition, to be had of Mr. White, Fleet-street.

Ganges, whose king could bring into the field so many myriads of men, infantry and cavalry, and such a numerous body of elephants trained to war. I have, already, in some degree, gone over the ground in the Indian Antiquities;* but those who possess not that work, have also a right to know and to find in the present work, somewhat of the history of the two most celebrated cities of India, at the respective periods when they flourished in their proudest glory, and for their information I insert the following abridgment. The fact is, that the description of one ancient Indian capital is the description of all; and whether in this great Eastern division of India, that capital were Canouge, or Oude, or Patna, it is of little concern, if the reader be adequately impressed with the grandeur, and power of this mighty empire, and its potent sovereign.

Although it be now generally agreed that Palibothra and Canouge were not the same capitals, yet I must again observe, the circumstances that led to that conjecture are very strong, and deserve some notice.

Palibothra is placed on the map † of Ptolemy in the 27th degree of north latitude; in Mr. Rennell's map, Canouge is fixed in latitude 27° 3′, an inconsiderable difference indeed, when we recollect that the one is the most ancient and the other the most modern map extant. Indeed it is worthy of remark, and greatly to the honour of Ptolemy's fidelity, that on a comparison of the latitudes of five different places between the Indus and the Ganges, Mr. Rennell found the greatest difference to be only twelve minutes between the latitudes of that geographer and his own. Palibothra, he observes,‡ is placed by Ptolemy between the towns of Maliba on the west and Athenagarum on the east. The latitude given for Palibothra is within three miles of that of Canouge: now the latitudes of Maliba and Athenagarum are nearly those of Matura and Oude; and the

* Vol. I. p. 175. † Ptolomæi Geograph. Asia, Tab. 10.

‡ Memoir, first edition, p. 42.

proportional distances of the former from Palibothra answer minutely to those of the latter from Canouge.

But the great circumstance that seemed to place the supposition of Mr. Rennell beyond all doubt was, the relation given us of the astonishing opulence and splendour of Palibothra in all the ancient writers of foreign extraction, and the corroborating testimony of the native historians of India, in regard to Canouge, who, in their description of this great city, fill us with the loftiest notions of its power, extent, population, and grandeur. Pliny, speaking of the capital of the Prasii, says: "*omnium in Indiâ prope, non modo in hoc tractu, potentiam claritatemque antecedunt Prasii, amplissima urbe ditissimaque Palibotra.*"* Ptolemy denominates it Παλιβοθρα Βασιλειον, the royal Palibothra; and Strabo,† from the account of Megasthenes, who had been there, particularizes its situation, extent, and dimensions. He asserts that it was situated at the conflux of another river with the Ganges; that its figure was quadrangular; that in length it was eighty stadia, in breadth fifteen stadia; that it had a fortification of wood, with turrets for the archers to shoot from, and was surrounded by a vast ditch, as well for the sake of defence as to receive the filth of so large a city.

Arrian ‡ calls it μεγιςιν πολιν Ινδοισιν, the greatest city among the Indians. He gives the same number of stadia for its length and breadth as Strabo; mentions the prodigious fosse, whose breadth was εξαπλεθρον, *sex jugerum*, and forty-five feet deep; that there were on its walls five hundred and seventy towers, and that it had sixty-five gates. Such is the account given of the city itself by those ancient geographers, by Pliny and Arrian.

Of the vast power and military forces of the reigning sovereigns on the Ganges, we find particular mention made in the historians Diodorus Siculus, in Curtius, in Justin, and Plutarch.

* Plinius, lib. vi. cap. 19. † Strabo, lib. xv. p. 667.

‡ Arrianus, p. 324.

Diodorus * informs us, that when Alexander had passed the Hyphasis, he was informed, that, if he continued his progress towards the Ganges, after crossing a desert of twelve days journey, he would meet on the banks of that river the most formidable sovereign of India, called Xambranes, king of the Gangarides, at the head of an army of twenty thousand horse, two hundred thousand foot, two thousand chariots of war, and four thousand fighting elephants. Curtius † asserts that the king of the Gangarides guarded the frontiers of his dominions with twenty thousand horse and two hundred thousand foot, and that he could bring into the field two thousand chariots and three thousand elephants. Plutarch ‡ computes the power and forces of this mighty dynasty of kings, at a still more extravagant rate; for he says, their combined army amounted to eighty thousand horse, two hundred thousand foot, eight thousand armed chariots, and six thousand elephants of war. Convinced that the magnitude of these forces would appear incredible to his readers, he assures them it was no idle report; for that Sandrocottus, who was then but a youth, and saw Alexander in his camp, some years afterwards conquered all these countries with an army of six hundred thousand men; and bought the friendship of Seleucus, the successor of Alexander, with a present of five hundred elephants.

Justin § gives to Alexander the honour of conquering the Gangarides, but mentions another nation by the name of Cuphites, who were ready to engage him with two hundred thousand horse, but with whom his harassed soldiers refused to fight, demanding to be led back to their native country, that their mangled and emaciated carcases might at last find rest in the sepulchres of their fathers.

But it is now time to inquire whether the accounts given us of

* Diod. Sic. lib. xvii. p. 678.
† Curtius, lib. ix. cap. 2
‡ Plut. in Vitâ Alex.
§ Justin. lib. xii. cap. 8.

Canouge, by the Oriental historians, in any degree equal the lofty description of Palibothra above recited.

I have already mentioned Oude as the first imperial city of Hindostan, or at least, of this its Eastern region. In Maghadah, or South Bahar, not far remote, the long dynasty of the Surajahs, or Children of the Sun, are said to have reigned, and whatever might have been their principal city in that soobah, doubtless Oude was their occasional capital. According to the Mahabbarat, Oude continued the imperial city during the space of about fifteen hundred years, when one of the princes of that dynasty erected upon the banks of the Ganges the great city of Canouge, the circumference of whose walls is there said to have been fifty coss, or one hundred miles.*

This event took place about the year 1000 before the Christian æra. The simple and pure worship of the deity, prescribed by Menu, the great Indian legislator, is said about this period to have degenerated into an idolatrous veneration of the host of heaven, and the elements of nature. Temples and images were erected, and sacred rites instituted, in honour of the memory of heroes eminent in arts, or successful in war; and Canouge was adorned with the lofty edifices raised by royal vanity and vulgar superstition.

Sinkol, already mentioned as having been a native of Canouge, and the third emperor in succession after the extinction of the dynasty above alluded to, is asserted, in the same book, to have kept up in this capital an army, whose magnitude greatly exceeds, in the number of foot and horse, the forces enumerated by Plutarch; and in that of elephants, it is remarkable, exactly equals the amount stated by Diodorus Siculus. Sinkol brought into the field against Affrasiah, king of Persia, four thousand elephants of war, a hundred thousand horse, and four hundred thousand foot; a force which, except in the number of elephants, ought not, for India, to be

* Ferishta, citing the Mahabbarat, Vol. I. p. 5.

thought incredible, since (not to mention Xerxes's million) Timur is acknowledged to have had at one time nine hundred thousand men in the field; since Aurengzeb, in the last century, maintained a standing force of five hundred thousand men; since the army which followed Mahommed Shah to the plains of Karnal was so vast as to defy computation, and, according to the strong expression of a modern writer, "to be famished by its own numbers;" and since a soobahdar of the Decan, almost in our own times, could bring into the field an army of eighty thousand horse, and two hundred thousand foot.

In the beginning of the sixth century, as we have before stated, this city was grown so populous, that there were in it thirty thousand shops in which areca or beetle-nut,* which the Hindoos almost universally use as the Europeans do tobacco, was sold; and sixty thousand bands of musicians and singers, who paid a tax to the government, resided there; from which circumstance we may judge of the great extent, and, it may be added, the dissipation, of this renowned capital.

From this period to that of Mahmud's invasion, several desultory intimations have been given, in the preceding pages, respecting the rank and consequence of the Canouge sovereigns, the junction of their forces with those of the five other great Indian rajahs, to oppose the irruptions of Subuctagi and his son; the corroborating evidence as to their power and splendour, by the Arabian travellers of the ninth and tenth centuries, and the decided attestations of the Ayeen Akbery, and the Oriental authorities consulted by Sir William Jones.†

I shall conclude the subject with remarking, that a variety of resembling circumstances, and the near approach of the LATITUDES,

* In the Ayeen Akbery it is said, that the soobah of Agra, in which Canouge stands, is remarkable for producing very excellent beetle-leaf.

† Ayeen Akbery, Vol. I. p. 42. History of Persia, p. 30.

in particular, as given by Ptolemy and the English geographer, strongly incline me to suppose that Canouge and Patna (Sir W. Jones's presumed Palibothra,) were both made use of as capitals, by the same prince, in the same manner as Delhi and Agra, were in later times; that accounts were transmitted to their countrymen of these capitals by Greek and Roman travellers, who had visited them; and that these accounts, originally distinct, had been confounded by the classical authors in whose writings they are found. But I must again repeat, that the most important concern to the reader, is not whether this or that particular city was the capital of the empire on the Ganges, but what that capital in fact was, in point of splendour and magnificence; and of none in Asia are the accounts more grand and impressive than the above of Palibothra and Canouge.

Concerning Mahmud's toilsome march of three months, and penetration of Hindostan by the mountains of Tibet, through which his direct route lay, no particulars are given, but when with his immense army he arrived before the walls of Canouge, he is said there to have "beheld a city which raised its head to the firmament, and which in strength and structure, might justly boast to have no equal."* The reigning sovereign, rajah Korra, we are told, affected in his habits of living, the utmost pomp and splendour, but from the unusual route taken by Mahmud, which was through the mountains north of Cashmere, and the celerity with which his numerous cavalry poured down from the hills, being totally unapprised of the approach of so vast an army, he was unable to collect together an adequate body of troops to oppose him in the field. One hundred thousand horse were already ravaging the suburbs of that great city; the fierce manners and determined aspect of the hardy Afghan and Tartar bands struck unspeakable terror into the souls of the astonished citizens; and the Indian troops that formed the customary guard, consisting mostly of infantry, vast in number, but

* Ferishta, Vol. I. p. 27.

enervated like their master, by pleasure, and immersed in boundless debauchery, fled in every direction from their destroying sabres. The rajah convinced that all opposition would be unavailing, made a virtue of necessity, and, with his family, went out in a suppliant manner, to the camp of Mahmud, to claim his mercy, and solicit his protection. These were readily granted; the keys of the city and palace of the metropolis of India were delivered up, and the sultan, after rifling both of their unequalled wealth, is said to have reposed there himself and his army three nights.

There were in the fertile and populous district of India adjoining, several forts of great strength, and cities full of riches, the report of which induced him, at the expiration of that period, to march with all his forces against them. The first object of his attack was Merat, or Mevat, situated in the DOOAB, or interamnian country, stretching between the Ganges and Jumna, about thirty coss from Delhi; but if the maharajah himself could not withstand the overwhelming torrent that bore down every thing before it, and swept away the wealth and glory of his capital, what barrier to its desolating progress could be raised by an inferior rajah of the DOOAB? Hirdit, therefore, with what on other occasions might be deemed no contemptible army, sought his safety in flight; leaving, however, in Mevat a sufficient garrison to employ the sultan, and prevent a pursuit. In a few days that garrison was compelled to capitulate, and the plunder of the city, added to a stipulated sum, but not of great magnitude, in money and elephants, soothed, though it might not satiate, the avarice of the captor.

Mavin, a strong fort on the banks of the Jumna, in the same region, next attracted the attention of Mahmud, and was summoned to submit. The rajah, by name Calchunder, reluctantly marched out, with that pacific intent, at the head of the army that owned him for its chief. Occasioned either by the jealous hatred of the Indian, or the barbarous insolence of the Gaznavide soldiers, or,

probably, by the collision of both, a quarrel unexpectedly arising among certain individuals of the two armies, suddenly spread from rank to rank, till the spirit of rancour and revenge becoming universal, both armies rushed together in dreadful conflict, and a horrible carnage ensued of those unhappy men, who were bartering liberty for safety. Calchunder himself and his family, were in the tumultuous rage of conflict, driven into the river, where dreading captivity, worse than death, he desperately plunged his sword first into the bosom of his wife and children, and then into his own. The fort was immediately surrendered by the small garrison left to defend it, and in it were found an immense spoil, together with seventy elephants of war, a proof of the magnitude of that fort, and the power of its rajah.

On the extreme southern verge of the dominions of the rajah of Delhi, and thirty-six miles above Agra, stood the ancient, rich, and most renowned city of Mattura, which has been before mentioned as the Methora of Ptolemy. Having been the scene of the birth and early adventures of the greatest and most beloved deity of the Hindoos, CREESHNA, or Veeshnu, in the eighth avatar, many of which, at this place and its immediate neighbourhood, have been detailed in his life, inserted in the Ancient History, Mathura was ever regarded by the whole nation in a light peculiarly sacred. Its very name was pronounced with reverential awe, and, according to the Ayeen Akbery,* the whole country round for forty-eight coss, is accounted holy. No idea can be formed of the riches and splendour of this great city, the ancient metropolis of the pious YADU tribe, on which kings, and saints, and reverend pilgrims, had for ages been heaping uncounted treasures. Ferocious as Mahmud was in war, and delighting in the devastation and subversion of the sacred cities and buildings of India, he is said, by Ferishta, to have been equally astonished and enraptured, when he beheld the admirable

* Ayeen Akbery, Vol. II. p. 547.

beauty and majestic grandeur of its lofty and numerous temples, whose gorgeous shrines were loaded with offerings brought from the remotest parts of India, ever burning with the purest naphtha, ever fragrant with the costliest incense.

The soul of the invader was electrified with joy at the tidings of the wealth of Mattura, whither he instantly urged his desolating progress. The enfeebled arm of the rajah of Delhi, to whom of ancient time its defence was confided, was, in vain, raised for its defence. The troops participating the savage ardour of Mohammedan zeal, which fired the breast of their master against Indian idols, and also inflamed with a similar passion for the precious materials of which they were generally composed, forced their irresistible way into the center of that hallowed city, which the remorseless Mahmud at once delivered over to boundless spoliation and rapine. Nothing can be conceived more dreadful than the wild and wasteful havock made by soldiers impelled by such sentiments to destroy every thing deemed sacred and valuable in the consecrated metropolis of an innocent and unoffending, though infatuated, race of men, for the most part priests and devotees, whose only weapons are prayers, and whose only hopes of succour are from the too obdurate skies. As the women of Hindostan, according to Sir William Jones,* are in a more peculiar manner devoted to Creeshna, or rather, to use his own words, are passionately fond of that god, in this his pastoral avatar, and as Mattura was the ground on which was originally instituted the sacred dance of the Gopi's, or nine beautiful mistresses of Creeshna, engraved on one of Holwell's plates, no doubt the whole city was crowded with those enchanting women, selected for sacred purposes, from the noblest families, and called the *girls of the idol:* the shrieks therefore of violated beauty, added to the cries of a numerous and frantic priesthood raging through the streets, or expiring on their own altars, must have

* Asiatic Researches, Vol. I. p. 160.

greatly increased the horrors of this tremendous scene. While the troops were plundering the spacious city, Mahmud, with his chosen bands, was engaged in despoiling the pagodas, burning some, and mutilating others of the innumerable images contained in them, and doubtless allusive to the various feats recorded in the eventful history of Creeshna; his combats with dæmons and giants; and his patronage of virtuous, or punishment of vicious, princes, whom he descended from heaven to protect or extirpate.

The accumulated mass of wealth acquired in Mattura was prodigious; for, independently of the plunder of the palaces and private houses, in the various temples alone were found five great idols of pure gold, with eyes of rubies, each of which eyes was worth fifty thousand dinars. Upon another idol was found a sapphire, weighing four hundred miskal; and the image being melted down, produced ninety-eight thousand three hundred miskal of pure gold. Besides these, there were above a hundred idols of silver, which loaded a hundred camels with bullion.*

Mahmud is said to have taken up his abode in Mattura for twenty days, during which a fire, the effect either of design or accident, consumed a great part of the city, and greatly augmented the sufferings of the terrified inhabitants. He then marched against other forts in that district, some of which held out a long time, and were, at length, with great difficulty reduced; others submitted at the first summons; while others, again, were content to purchase his protection by the proffer of large sums of money, and a numerous train of elephants. The names of two or three of these assaulted forts are given in Ferishta, and some of the circumstances of their capture detailed; but they are not important enough to be noticed in a general history like the present, that aims only to pourtray the more striking characters, and record the more prominent events of the times. In fact, of so uniform a nature are most of these attacks,

* Ferishta, Vol. I. p. 58.

and defences of Indian places of strength, that a too frequent repetition of them could not fail to prove tedious and disgusting to the reader. With respect to Mahmud himself, having by these additional efforts, greatly increased the precious burthen of gems and gold, that already weighed down his overloaded elephants and camels, he slowly bent his course, by Lahore, to Gazna, where the opening of the royal stores and baggage exhibited to the inhabitants of that capital such an astonishing display of riches of every various species as no former irruption had produced; the officers and private soldiers were, also, oppressed with the multitude of their captives and the weight of gold and silver bullion, in value equalling the enormous acquisition of the sultan himself; and the rapid circulation of this wealth through the city, soon contributed to exalt Gazna in splendour and opulence above the proudest cities of Asia. Mosques, baths, palaces, bazars, aqueducts, were constructed in every quarter of the city, and to the efforts of affluent individuals to adorn it, were added those of the sultan, who expended a large portion of the wealth of India, in erecting in grateful acknowledgment to heaven, one supremely beautiful and magnificent mosque of marble and granite, the interior of which was hung with the richest embroidered carpets that the looms of India and Persia could produce, and adorned with golden chandeliers, and such a profusion of other ornaments of the most costly kind, that it became celebrated through Asia by the name of the "celestial bride." Nor, while he paid this ostentatious homage to Heaven, that Heaven which he had insulted by his cruelties and sanguinary ambition, did Mahmud, who is said himself to have been a learned man and a poet, wholly neglect the interests of science; for, near that mosque, from the same abundant source, he instituted an university, which he stored with an infinite variety of books in all languages, among them possibly some precious fragments of an historical kind from plundered India, that have long ago perished in the wreck of that capital!

and not only with books, but with other rare and curious productions gleaned from the vast field of nature, or fabricated by human industry and genius. He appointed, also, professors in the different departments of science, with ample stipends for their own support and that of the studious youth who were to become their pupils. These liberal and politic institutions, however, could consume but an inconsiderable portion of the treasure recently accumulated on Indian ground, and by far the greater part was added to that incalculable mass of hoarded wealth which every fresh irruption beyond the Indus contributed to increase.

The fame of Mahmud's continued conquests in Hindostan, and triumph over idolatry, having reached Bagdad, the caliph then reigning, made a great festival on the joyful occasion, conferred on him titles of the highest honour, and ordered an account of his victories to be publicly read to the enraptured populace. Mahmud in A. D. 1021, to manifest a proper sense of gratitude for these favours, dispatched an army, headed by a skilful general, to open the roads to Mecca, which had long been obstructed by the wild Arabs, who were accustomed to murder the pilgrims, and plunder the caravans.

His attention, however, was soon diverted from Mecca to Hindostan, where, enraged at his sacrilegious depredations in Mathura, and vowing revenge against rajah Korra, for forming an alliance with the infidel robber of his country, the princes of that district had risen in arms to dethrone and exterminate the impious parricide. On receiving this intelligence, Mahmud, ever faithful to his engagements, instantly began the long march to Canouge, but arrived too late to save his vassal from the fury of his exasperated assailants. The rajah of Callinger, Nunda by name, had already in a general battle, attacked, defeated, and consigned him and his principal officers to destruction. He then marched with the apparent intent of giving Mahmud battle, and the hostile armies encamped

on the opposite banks of the intervening Jumna. The impetuous valour of certain officers in the army of Mahmud, inducing them without orders, in the dead of night, to swim across the stream and storm the enemy's camp, the Indians, ignorant of the force that attacked them, and supposing they were followed by the whole body of the invading army, instantly betook themselves to flight. Mahmud, on receiving this intelligence, was greatly incensed, as it was his intention to make the attack with his whole army, compel the enemy to come to a general engagement, and thus terminate the matter on the spot. To atone for the error as much as possible, he immediately ordered a vigorous pursuit, and at length overtaking the rajah on the frontiers of his own dominions, both armies halted, and prepared for battle. A force consisting of thirty-six thousand horse, forty-five thousand foot, and six hundred and fifty elephants, with which Nunda opposed the further progress of Mahmud, sufficiently evinces the power and pre-eminence, at this period, of the rajah of Callinger.

His subjects were, doubtless, the Callingæ Gangaridæ mentioned by Pliny,* though he places them nearer the ocean, and in all times, from the strength and elevation of that amazing fortress, their prince, though inferior to the sovereign of Canouge, must have been extremely formidable. The reader has been already made acquainted from the Ayeen Akbery, with the importance and strength of the fortress of this name, said there to have been situated upon a very lofty mountain, and of so ancient a date in Indian annals, that no one can tell by whom it was founded ; that within the circuit of it were many springs, and such a large tract of cultivated ground, as produced grain sufficient for the garrison during a long siege. Nunda, thus pausing on the frontiers of his dominion, induced the sultan to suppose he meant at last to meet him in battle. Ascending, therefore, an eminence, for the purpose of reconnoitring the strength of

* Hist. Nat. lib. vi. cap. 19.

the enemy, in the sight of the whole army, this artful, sanguinary bigot, prostrated himself before God, and fervently prayed for his blessing on the Mussulman cause, and on the standard of Gazna. The day, however, being far advanced, he resolved not to make the intended attack till the ensuing morning; but long before dawn, the wary rajah, foreboding the event, precipitately and silently decamped from the field, leaving behind him, for the amusement of a foe devoted to plunder, his tents, equipage, and baggage. Mahmud did not at this time, think proper to pursue him farther, or proceed to the investment of that almost impregnable retreat, to which he retired with his forces. He contented himself with the plunder of his camp, in which he found a great booty, with a numerous supply of elephants, afforded by the neighbouring woods, and with ravaging and firing the country, for many coss round. After these acts of unworthy revenge, the disappointed sultan led back his army to Gazna.

In A. H. 413, corresponding to A. D. 1022, commenced the tenth Indian expedition of this restless marauder, in which the countries of Kiberat and Nardien, described as bordering upon the provinces of Hindostan, and as infected with the Indian superstitions, felt his reforming fury. The particular superstition prevalent among them, is said to have been the worship of lions, by which, if any species of Indian devotion be meant, it must have been the adoration of Veeshnu in the SING, or *Lion Avatar*, the history of which has been given in the preceding volume. If, however, they had worshipped *lambs* instead of *lions*, it would have made no difference to Mahmud, if that worship happened to be celebrated in temples decorated with gold and gems, if the worshippers were profanely wealthy, and the priests possessed accumulated hoards of sacred treasure. These appear to have been the leading incentives and primary objects of all his invasions, however ardent might be his zeal for Islamism, and however urgent the goad of his ambition. The prince of Kiberat is represented, as readily submitting himself to the resistless potentate,

who dictated at once, a civil and religious code, entirely new to himself and his people; while the district of Nardien was subdued by his general Ali, and being a frontier province, that commander was ordered to erect in it a fort of great strength, for the purpose of overawing the turbulent inhabitants within its bounds, as well as of repelling invasion from without.

Mahmud then continued his march towards Lahore, of which kingdom, it has been before intimated, the province of Cashmere at that period formed a part, and again attempted the reduction of the celebrated castle of Locote, which had already resisted his utmost efforts. A renewed assault, continued with vigour during a whole month, convinced him of the utter inefficacy of any future attacks upon that impregnable fort, and he retired in rage from before it, in order to wreak his vengeance on the capital of the often assailed kingdom of Lahore, which he at length resolved to make an integral part of the Gaznavian empire. Patturu-Jeipal could now no longer fly for protection to the Cashmerian mountains, and, therefore, retired southward to the strong holds of Ajmere, while the exterminating sultan entering, with little opposition from the garrison, his rich and splendid metropolis, gave it up to the unrestrained pillage and desolating ravages of a licentious soldiery. As Lahore was in ancient times, the centre of an immense commerce, carried on with all the northern provinces and kingdoms of Asia, even to Tartary and China, the booty taken in the plunder of it, can be more easily conceived than described, nor is description attempted in Ferishta. Mahmud spent the winter at this capital, settling the affairs of the province, over which he appointed a viceroy, and over the inferior cities and districts on the Indian frontier, subordinate governors from among the bravest and noblest omrahs of his court. In the spring he returned to Gazna, loaded with its treasures, and incumbered with the multitude of his captives.*

* Ferishta, Vol. I. p. 61. Herbelot, 109. Mirkhond apud Texeira, p. 283.

The very next year we find him, unsatiated, insatiable, again in motion, and engaged in his eleventh Indian expedition. Marching by the way of his newly-acquired territory of Lahore, he bent his devastating progress once more towards the distant Ganges, determined to reduce the prince of Callinger, and other confederated rajahs, who, by their artful stratagems or obstinate resistance, had contrived in some degree to mar the glories of his former campaigns in that quarter. It required, however, superior military tactics to those that were known to Mahmud, or in Mahmud's age, to attack with success, the hill-forts of Hindostan, among which Gwalior and Callinger are not the least considerable. In his way passing by the former fort, he immediately began the investment of it, and I shall therefore, take the opportunity of presenting the reader with a description of it, as it will suit a great many others; they being, for the most part, similar in their form, their elevation, and in the works raised for their defence. Mr. Hodges has, of recent years, visited, and with an accurate eye surveyed this celebrated fort, evidenced by the two beautiful views of it, given in his Indian Designs. To himself and captain Jonathan Scott, the reader is indebted for the accompanying general sketch.

The former acquaints us, that the fort of Gwalior is seated on the summit of a mountain, towering on high amidst a country perfectly flat. The rock on which it is situated is on every side perpendicular, either formed so by nature or by art. A town, which in Mahmud's time, was a large city, and the capital of a kingdom of its own name, stands near the foot of the mountain. This town, and indeed the whole base of the mountain, is surrounded by a lofty wall. Mr. Hodges says, it is considered as the Gibraltar of the East, as well for its natural situation, as for the strength of the works constructed upon it. On the top of the mountain there are cultivated plains of considerable extent, and springs that afford at all times, an abundant supply of water. By the Hindoos, Gwalior has always been considered

as impregnable. It stands in the heart of Hindostan Proper, about eighty miles to the south of Agra, and about one hundred and thirty west of the Ganges.*

By the other writer, we are informed of some farther particulars; that the rock on which Gwalior stands, is four miles in length; but narrow, of unequal breadth, and nearly flat on the top; and that the perpendicular height is from two to three hundred feet. The rampart, he says, conforms to the edge of the precipice all round, and the only entrance is by steps cut out of the solid rock, defended on the side next the country, by a wall and bastions, and further guarded by seven stone gateways, at certain distances from each other. He also describes the area as abounding with noble buildings of stone, reservoirs of water, and cultivated lands.†

Concerning Mahmud's intended plan of operations, we have no particulars, but according to the above statement, neither force nor famine, seemed adequate to its reduction, and we are not surprised to find him in a few days retiring from before it, pacified by the rajah's submission, by many magnificent presents, and thirty-five elephants. His whole force was now at liberty to act against the prince of Callinger, who by presents still more splendid, and the offer of no less than *three hundred* elephants, proposed to avert the impending storm. The soul of Mahmud relented, and a circumstance shortly after occurred, that contributed to turn incipient esteem for the rajah into friendship and admiration. Determined by rather a dangerous experiment, to try the valour of the sultan's troops, Nunda contrived, by certain drugs, to intoxicate the elephants. In this state, without riders, they were urged forward, furious and precipitate, to the sultan's camp; but he observing the wildness of their motions, instantly conjectured what had been done, and ordered some of his best and bravest horse to attack and drive the enraged animals into an adjoining forest, where they were soon

* Hodges Travels in India, p. 137. † Ibid. p. 139.

mastered and tamed. The game played by the rajah on this occasion, seemed of a suspicious nature; but an elegant panegyric, composed by the rajah in Indian verse, and immediately dispatched to Mahmud, on the undaunted bravery of troops who dared to confront, and had skill to reduce to obedience, a train of intoxicated elephants, excited the applause and delight of the whole court, in which there were several celebrated Indian, Arabian, and Persian scholars; and Mahmud, flattered and gratified by the compliment, not only left him in the quiet possession of his own strong fort, but added to it, fifteen other inferior ones, which he had reduced in the present and preceding expeditions.

It was no poetical tribute, however, no unsubstantial boon that rewarded his pious toils in his twelfth and last Indian irruption, in the year 1024, when he besieged the city and castle of Sumnaut, in the province of Guzzurat. Sumnaut is described to have been the most celebrated resort of idolatrous devotees in the south of Hindostan; indeed the idol here adored, which gave name to the city and the wide tract around it, seemed to claim pre-eminence over all that were worshipped throughout the whole country, for the different rajahs of that region, are said to have bestowed, in all, two thousand villages, with their territories, for the support of its vast establishment, and the priests who constantly attended at his temple amounted to above two thousand in number. Of that temple itself, the most extravagant relations are given by Mirkhond, to whom Ferishta is indebted for his account, both in respect to its surprising magnitude, and the profusion of gold and gems with which it was decorated. It was situated in a peninsula, on the shore of the ocean by which it was bounded on three sides, near Deo Bunder, or the harbour of Diu, recently in the hands of the Portuguese.

The word Sumnaut, according to Ferishta, is compounded of Sum, the rajah who erected it, (more probably from Soma, the

moon,) and NAUT, the name of the idol, signifying the creator. Other authorities, however, cited by Herbelot, assign to the idol adored at Diu, the name of LAT. His followers maintained, that souls after death went before Sumnaut, who transferred them into other bodies, human or bestial, according to their merits in a former state; and his priests confidently asserted, that for the sins of their inhabitants, the great cities of Delhi and Canouge had been deserted by the god, but that otherwise he could, in the twinkling of an eye, have blasted the whole army of Mahmud.

The lofty roof of Sumnaut was supported by fifty-six pillars overlaid with plates of gold, and incrusted at intervals with rubies, emeralds, and other precious stones. One pendant lamp alone illumined the spacious fabric, whose light, reflected back from innumerable jewels, spread a strong and refulgent lustre throughout the whole temple. In the midst stood Sumnaut himself, an idol composed of one entire stone, fifty cubits in height, forty-seven of which were buried in the ground; and, on that spot, according to the Brahmins, he had been worshipped between four and five thousand years, a period beyond which, it is remarkable, they seldom venture to ascend; for, it is a period at which their Cali, or present age, commences: it is, in short, the period of that flood, beyond which, human records *cannot* ascend. His image was washed every morning and evening with fresh water brought from the Ganges, at the distance of twelve hundred miles. Around the dome were dispersed some thousands of images, in gold and silver, of various shapes and dimensions, so that on this spot, as in a grand pantheon, seemed to be assembled all the deities venerated in Hindostan.

Mahmud being informed of the riches collected at Sumnaut, as well as of the tremendous menace of the idol, if he approached that hallowed shrine, was determined to put the power of the god to instant trial. Leaving Gazna with an immense army, and advancing by the way of Multan and Ajmere, through two terrible desarts,

where nothing but the most prudent exertions saved that army from being annihilated by famine, he arrived without opposition, before the walls of Sumnaut. On the high battlements of the temple were assembled an innumerable multitude in arms, when a herald approaching denounced the vengeance of the god, and informed the besiegers that their idol, Sumnaut, had drawn them together to that spot, that he might crush them in a moment, and avenge, by one dreadful and general ruin, the destruction of the gods of Hindostan. In spite of these awful imprecations Mahmud commenced an immediate and vigorous assault; and drove the defendants from the walls, which the besiegers, by scaling ladders, instantly mounted, exclaiming aloud, "Allah Akbar." The Hindoos, who had retreated into the temple and prostrated themselves before their idol, in devout expectation of seeing the enemy discomfited by the signal and instantaneous vengeance of heaven, finding their expectations vain, made a desperate effort for the preservation of the place. Rushing in a body on the assailants, they repulsed them with great slaughter; and, as fast as fresh forces ascended the walls, pushed them headlong down with their spears. This advantage they maintained for two days, fighting like men who had devoted themselves to that death, which their belief in the metempsychosis assured them was only a passage to felicity and glory.

At the end of this period, a vast army of idolaters coming to their relief, drew the attention of Mahmud from the siege to his own more immediate safety. Leaving, therefore, a body of troops to amuse the besieged, he took a more favourable station, and prepared to engage the advancing enemy. These were led to battle by Rajah Byram Deo, from whose family the territory of Deo received its name, and other considerable rajahs, under the certain persuasion that the cause for which they were to fight would insure victory to their arms. Accordingly, they fought with a heroism proportionate to their superstition; and, before victory declared for Mahmud, five

thousand Hindoos lay slaughtered on the field. The garrison of Sumnaut, after this defeat, giving up all for lost, issued out of a gate that looked towards the ocean, and embarked in boats to the number of four thousand, with an intent to proceed to the island of Serandib, or Ceylon; but, information of their flight having been given to the sultan, he seized all the boats that remained in the harbour, and sent after them a select body of his best troops, who, capturing some, and sinking others, permitted few of the miserable fugitives to escape.

After placing a large body of guards at the gates and round the walls, Mahmud entered the city, and approaching the temple was struck with the majestic grandeur of that ancient structure; but, when he entered in and saw the inestimable riches it contained, he was filled with astonishment, mingled with delight. In the fury of Mohammedan zeal he smote off the nose of the idol with a mace which he carried, and ordered the image to be disfigured and broke to pieces. While they were proceeding to obey his command, a croud of Brahmins, frantic at this treatment of their idol, petitioned his omrahs to interfere, and offered some crores in gold, if he would forbear farther to violate the image of their deity. They urged, that the demolition of the idol would not remove idolatry from the walls of Sumnaut, but that such a sum of money, given among believers, would be an action truly meritorious. The sultan acknowledged the truth of their remark, but declared, that he would never become that base character, which a co-incidence with their petition would render him, a seller of idols. The persons appointed, therefore, proceeded in their work; and, having mutilated the superior parts, broke in pieces the body of the idol, which had been made hollow, and contained an infinite variety of diamonds, rubies, and pearls of a water so pure, and of a magnitude so uncommon, that the beholders were filled with surprise and admiration. This unexpected treasure, with all the other spoil, taken in the temple and city of

Sumnaut, were immediately secured and sent to Gazna; while fragments of the demolished idol were distributed to the several mosques of Mecca, Medina, and Gazna, to be thrown at the threshold of their gates, and trampled upon by devout and zealous mussulmen.*

Mahmud, determined to chastise the insolence of Byram and the other rajahs, who had molested him during the siege, staid some time in this part of India, and was so charmed with the fertility and salubrious climate of the country round Narwalla,† the capital of Guzzurat, that he hesitated, whether he should not make it the seat of his empire. To this he was further incited, by the reports which he had heard of mines of gold in that country, of which, if those reports were ever true, no traces now remain. It is said likewise, that he had designed to fit out a fleet for the conquest of the island of Serendib, and the country of Pegu, which he had been informed abounded with gold and ruby mines; but the hazard of this measure being urged by his omrahs, he was induced to drop the scheme, and by the same councils prevailed upon not to abandon his native kingdom and capital.

The Brahmins at this period seem to have had their most flourishing settlement in Guzzurat, for many of its princes were of that noble order; and the sultan, after having subdued Byram and his comrades, left the government in the hands of Dabissalima, an ancient and learned Brahmin. In his return to Gazna, by the way of Sind and Multan, after an absence of two years and six months, he also met with desarts, where his army being led astray, for three days and nights, by one of his Hindoo guides, suffered incredible hardships, such as no foresight could guard against; but while his troops were expiring in the pangs of madness for want of water, and the horses, camels, and elephants perishing by

* Ferishta, Vol. I. p. 71. Mirkhond apud Taxeira, p. 186. Herbelot, Bibliotheque Orientale, p. 534, under the article Mahmud.

† So called from Narwal, according to Ferishta, the ancient name of that kingdom.

the failure of vegetables, the guide, being suspected, was put to the torture, and confessed that he was one of the *priests of Sumnaut*, who thus endeavoured to revenge the insults offered to his god. He was instantly put to death, and Mahmud, say his flattering historians, was preserved by the miraculous interposition of heaven.*

Not long after his return, the health of Mahmud began visibly to decline; but the indisposition of his body, by no means damped the active ardour of his mind. In the decline of life, he added the vast province, or rather kingdom of Persian Irak, to his domain, of which Ray and Ispahan were at that time the celebrated capitals, and over which the house of Boia had for many ages ruled with absolute sway. Majdoddawla, a pusillanimous and indolent prince, the last of that race, resigned his sceptre without striking a blow, and approached Mahmud, in the vain confidence that his ready submission would, from the clemency of the victor, procure him back the crown he had thus voluntarily surrendered. Being brought into his presence, the sultan asked him if he had ever read the Shah Nama, or History of the kings of Persia, composed by Ferdusi. To which the captive monarch replied in the affirmative. Mahmud then demanded of him, "Whether he understood the game of chess;" and being again answered in the affirmative, addressed him in these terms: "Did you ever read in that book, or observe in that game, that two kings could exist together in the same place with an equality of power?" "No," returned Majdoddawla. "How came you, then," subjoined Mahmud, "to be so imprudent as to put yourself into my hands, and by that means to make me master both of your person and dominion?" He was afterwards conducted under a strong escort to Gazna, where he shortly after expired. In the treasury of the degraded king he found a million of gold dinars in coined money, and jewels that amounted to five hundred thousand

* Ferishta, Vol. I. p. 74.

dinars more. He likewise met with a vast quantity of gold and silver plate, and many other very valuable effects, with which, and a noble library, found in the palace of Ray, he returned once more to his capital*.

In a short time, finding his end approach, this brave and fortunate, but rapacious conqueror commanded that all the sacks of gold and caskets of precious stones, which were in the treasury, should be placed in order before him, on which having long and attentively fixed his eyes, he remained for some minutes silent, and then burst into tears. He ordered the following day, a review of his army, his elephants, camels, horses, and chariots, with which, having for some time feasted his eye from his lofty travelling throne, he again shed a flood of tears, and retired in anguish of heart to his palace. His disorder, which was a slow or hectic fever, occasioned by an ulcer in his lungs, daily gaining ground, he by a solemn deed, appointed his youngest son Mohammed, to succeed him in the sovereignty of all his vast dominions, except that of the Persian Irak, which he had given to Mussud, his eldest; and shortly after expired at the palace of Gazna in the sixty-third year of his age, and the thirty-fifth of his reign, in the 421st year of the Hegira, and 1030 of the Christian æra.†

Sultan Mahmud, it is recorded, possessed many great and princely virtues; among them principally predominated a dauntless fortitude, profound political wisdom, and, on some occasions, he manifested a laudable spirit of inflexible justice; but they were all darkened by his execrable bigotry and his insatiable avarice. No man ever had such ample opportunities of gratifying it in its fullest extent. The wealth he amassed in his various wars, but particularly in his invasions of India, was of an enormous amount; and independently of

* Mirkhond apud Texeira, p. 284.

† Abulfeda Annales Muslem. Tom. III. p. 77. I adopt here the Chronology of Abulfeda, as more correct than Ferishta's, who places this event in A. H. 419.

these, he had other occasional sources to fly to for obtaining treasure. In particular, at the storming of Bagdad, he extorted from the caliph Al Kader Billa, at once, five millions of dirhms. The splendour of his court attracted thither the most celebrated scholars and poets from all parts of Asia. Here they were hospitably and splendidly entertained, out of the overflowings of wealth too vast to feel the deduction, and contributed to swell the pomp of a monarch, more ostentatious than really generous; and far more eager to obtain praise, than anxious to reward it. Of this, his conduct toward s the great poet Ferdusi, the Homer of Asia, was a striking proof. The reader will easily pardon me for transcribing the whole relation from the authentic page of Sir William Jones, who, with much of the poetic fire of Ferdusi, at an early period of life, experienced, from a great European sovereign, a similar ill treatment with that bard.*

"This most learned man, happening to find a volume of Persian history, of a very ancient date, read it with eagerness, and found it involved in fables, but bearing the marks of high antiquity: the most ancient part of it, and principally the war of Afrasiah and Khosro, or Cyrus, seemed to afford an excellent subject for an heroic poem, which he accordingly began to compose. Some of his episodes and descriptions were shewn to the sultan, who commended them exceedingly, and ordered him to comprise the whole history of Persia in a series of epic poems. The poet obeyed; and after the happiest exertions of his fancy and art, for near thirty years, he finished his work, which contained sixty thousand couplets in rhyme, all highly polished, with the spirit of our Dryden, and the sweetness of Pope. He presented an elegant transcript of his book to Mahmud, who coldly applauded his diligence, and dismissed him. Many months elapsed, and Ferdusi heard no more of his work: he then took occasion to remind the king of it by some little

* See the account of this matter as given by himself in the preface to Nadir Shah.

epigrams, which he contrived to let fall in his palace: but where an epic poem had failed, what could be expected from an epigram? At length the reward came; which consisted only of as many small pieces of money as there were couplets in the volume. The high minded poet could not brook this insult: he retired to his closet with bitterness in his heart, where he wrote a most noble and animated invective against the sultan, which he sealed up, and delivered to a courtier, who, as he had reason to suspect, was his greatest enemy, assuring him, that it was a diverting tale, and requesting him to give it to Mahmud, when any affair of state or bad success in war should make him more uneasy and splenetic than usual. Having thus given vent to his just indignation, he left Gazna in the night, and took refuge in Bagdad, where the caliph protected him from the power of the sultan, who demanded him in a furious and menacing letter."*

We are the more astonished at this unworthy treatment of the prince of Asiatic poets, because we are informed by all his biographers that Mahmud himself was a poet, and, at an early period of life, translated into verse a sublime treatise on government, composed by the Brahmins of India.†

Of the power, indeed, of elegant poetry to attract and mollify him, we have already given a striking proof in the pacificatory verses addresssd to him by the rajah of Callinger. His historians record another instance of its effect in soothing his turbulent passions, which is too curious to be passed over unnoticed. Mahmud seems, like other poets, to have occasionally indulged in the pleasures of the flowing goblet. In a moment of intoxication, he one night cut off the beautiful tresses of his favourite mistress. In the morning he was extremely afflicted for the outrage he had committed. The distracted state of his mind shewed itself in his wild and furious gestures. Nobody dared approach the agitated monarch. At length

* History of the Persian language, added to Nadir Shah, p. 167.

† See Fraser's Catalogue, added to *his* Nadir Shah, p. 20.

a celebrated philosopher and poet of the court addressed him in some beautiful lines artfully adapted to the sorrowful occasion. The sovereign's grief gradually subsided, and as the bard proceeded, he became so delighted with the effusion, that he ordered his mouth to be three times filled with jewels; an admirable mode of rewarding poetical merit, never, I believe, before or since practised! The sultan then, in spite of his zeal for the doctrines of the Coran, called aloud for wine, and seating the favourite poet by his side, forgot his cares in the renovated pleasures of the banquet.

Of his inflexible justice the following instance is inserted in Herbelot from the NIGHIARISTAN, composed by Al Kaswani.

A person, one day, in great agony of mind, abruptly rushed into his presence, while the king was sitting at his tribunal, and called loudly for JUSTICE. Mahmud desired him instantly to declare his complaint. He said, that he was a man in but indigent circumstances, but blest with a handsome wife, whose beauty had unfortunately excited the passion of an omrah of great wealth and rank; that the said omrah, with armed attendants, came frequently, at midnight, to his house, and after severely beating him, turned him into the street, while he gratified, by force, his libidinous desires. Tears of resentment and compassion started from the eyes of Mahmud, and he severely reprimanded the poor sufferer for not sooner preferring his complaint. The man replied that he had often attempted it, but could never gain admittance. "If," said Mahmud, "that omrah should ever trouble you again, let me know it without a moment's delay." Then ordering the guard to admit him at any hour, however unseasonable, he dismissed him. The third night following, the former outrage being renewed, the complainant hurried to the palace; but the king having retired to the haram, was refused admittance. Encouraged by the promises of Mahmud he now set up the most violent outcries, in hopes that the noise would alarm the court, and reach the ear of the king. The attempt

succeeded, and Mahmud snatching his robe in haste, followed the poor man to his house, attended by part of his guard. When arrived thither he immediately ordered the light to be extinguished, and cut the insolent omrah to pieces. After the execution he commanded a flambeau to be lighted, and then looked earnestly at the face of the criminal; this done, he prostrated himself, returned thanks to God, and called for some refreshment. The house of poverty afforded no other than some barley bread and a little stale wine, which however the sultan was contented with, and on the point of returning to his palace, was, after the most fervent expressions of gratitude, humbly solicited by the avenged husband to declare, why he ordered the light to be extinguished; why he prostrated himself after the death of the omrah; and lastly, how the fastidious appetite of a great king could put up with so beggarly a repast? The sultan with great condescension replied, that after his first complaint he conjectured that none of his numerous subjects, except his own son, would dare to commit an act of such horrible enormity in the capital where he resided; that determined to sacrifice so atrocious an offender to the justice of the laws, he ordered the light to be extinguished, lest compassion at the sight of so dear a relative should arrest his hand in the execution of that justice; that, finding it was not his son, he prostrated himself with grateful humility before God; and that he had eaten chearfully of his repast, however humble, because he had, on the instant of hearing his complaint, made a vow not to eat or drink till he had avenged himself on the base adulterer.*

Thus great, thus mean; thus formidable, thus contemptible; thus benevolent, thus cruel, was the potent Mahmud; whose empire extended from the shores of the Caspian to the mouth of the Indus; and from the Tigris to the Ganges. No Mohammedan prince before him, ever attained to so exalted a point of power and splendour, ever rolled in so much wealth, or was ever stained with so much

* Herbelot Bibliotheque Orientale, p. 535.

blood. The liberal patron of the arts, at Gazna; at Delhi, the remorseless despoiler of their proudest monuments! affecting towards the Great Creator the most zealous piety, but acting towards his creatures with ferocious barbarity. So singular a compound of qualities the most opposite, has seldom occurred in the historic page; though, in *these* pages, but too many characters will hereafter pass in review, polluted with all the vices, unmitigated by the virtues of Mahmud. Of the atrocities that marked a GENGIS, a TIMUR, and an AURENGZEB, it will soon be my painful task to give the black details, and to trace through desolated India, their blood-stained steps. I shall attempt neither to disguise, nor to palliate their crimes; but display them, for the contemplation of future depredators, in all the horrors of native deformity; under whatever sounding title concealed, endeavour to detect and expose the sordid baseness of avarice, to ensanguined ambition hold up the genuine mirror. This is the duty of the historian at all times, but more particularly, of an historian of India; the *debateable ground*, if I may so term it, of ravaged Asia—the ACELDAMA of the earth.

END OF PART I.

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